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CLASSICAL INDIA

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CLASSICAL INDIA VOLUME THREE

VEDIC INDIA

BY

LOUIS RENOU

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1. THE TEXTS

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

§ 1. Under the designation of the Veda—knowledge *par excellence*, that is sacred knowledge—are comprehended all the texts representing the religion which the Aryans brought with them into India and developed during many centuries on Indian soil. More exactly the term refers to a series of texts, of very various content and form, the common feature of which is that they are believed to derive from a "hearing" (sruti), that is, a revelation : they are held to have emanated from Brahman, to have been "breathed" by God in the form of "words", while their human authors, the Rishis or inspired sages, did no more than receive them by a direct "vision".

These texts include the Samhita or "collections", generally in verse, which contain more especially hymns, prayers and ritual formulae ; the Brahmana or "Brahmanic explanations", theological commentaries on the Samhitas, in prose ; the Aranyaka, "forest texts", and Upanishad (see § 78 on the meaning of this word), commentaries adjoined to the Brahmanas but of a more esoteric character.

Finally the Veda is concluded by the Vedanga, "(auxiliary) limbs of the Veda", subsidiary works of exegesis, explanation, which are not part of the Veda in the narrow sense : they are no longer sruti but smriti, "(tradition entrusted to) memory".

§ 2. The Veda is spoken of in the plural ; more precisely there are four Vedas, when reference is made to the four distinct types of Samhita—(1) the verses (rik) recited in the course of the sacrifices and collected in the Riksamhita or Rigveda ; (2) the sacrificial formulae (yajus), collected, with or without commentary, in the Yajuhsamhita or Yajurveda ; (3) the melodies (saman), of which the text is given in the Samasamhita or Samaveda ; (4) finally, the magical formulae (atharvan), which largely make up the Atharvasamhita or Atharvaveda. When we speak of the "three Vedas" we exclude the Atharva, which was collected at a later date, but this expression—or more commonly the related expression—trayi (vidya), "triple (science)", refers also to the three forms which distinguish the Samhitas, or rather the prayers (mantra) of which they are composed, namely, rik, yajus and saman.

§ 3. It is this imposing volume of texts which forms the foundation of Vedism, the most ancient form of Brahmanism, the point of departure of all the doctrines of classical India.

All this literature, or at least the greater part of it (though this has been doubted) was composed and preserved orally. This scarcely imaginable feat is explained by the immense effort of memory which men trained in this discipline from generation to generation were able to make. These texts were passed on from age to age, transmitted in general with meticulous care. Only at a comparatively recent date have they been committed to writing (Al Biruni, in the eleventh century, mentions a Veda recently put in written from in Kashmir by Vasukra). The most ancient manuscripts have no greater value than the evidence of the men who until only the other day still carried in their memory more or less extensive parts of the Veda.

(a) THE RIGVEDA

ARRANGEMENT OF THE TEXT

§ 4. The Rigveda or "Veda of verses", the most ancient and most important text of Vedism, exists in the form of a collection of 1028 hymns (sukta), divided into ten "circles" (mandala). The hymns contain from 1 to 58 verses ; the total number of verses is 10,462, and the average 10 per hymn. The total is also divided in a more mechanical way, which is also more recent, into eight parts (ashtaka), which are themselves divided into lessons (adhyaya), and these in turn into groups of five verses (varga). The mandala are also divided in a mechanical way into "recitations" (anuvaka).

As has been explained by Bergaigne, whose results Oldenberg has made more exact, the arrangement of the hymns and verses proceeds according to precise rules : in mandalas II to VII the arrangement of the hymns is by gods, with Agni at the head, followed by Indra, and in mandala IX by metres ; within any one series, determined by deity or by metre, the arrangement of the hymns is in descending order of the number of verses ; when several hymns have the same number of verses, they are arranged in descending order of the length of the metre ; the order of the series in a mandala is the descending order of the number of hymns in the series ; finally mandalas II to VII are themselves arranged according to the numbers of hymns they contain. Similar rules, but qualified by other tendencies, govern mandalas I, VIII and X. The discovery of these rules has allowed of the discovery of many interpolations, and the reconstruction of a more ancient model of the Samhita, in which hymns forming an artificial unity are to be divided into smaller groups, pragatha "verse groups", or tricha, "groups of three rik". This is the basis of the internal criticism of the Veda.

THE FORMATION OF THE SAMHITA

§ 5. The Rigveda was codified at a date which cannot be determined, but is certainly long after the assembly of its different parts. This codification consisted in subjecting to a definite arrangement hymns or series of hymns from different sources which had been preserved in the priestly families from various periods. This was accompanied by changes of language, intended in general to accommodate the text to the state of the language at the time, but sometimes, on the other hand, to make it more archaic. There have been later additions, and a certain amount of rearrangement ; the original form of the Samhita is lost to us as a result. We do not know how the early materials have been made use of. Tradition ascribes the compilation of the Rigveda (and of the other Vedas) to Vyasa, while it attributes to Sakalya the origin of the padapatha, "recitation by words", which presents the text in isolated words, to the neglect of the rules of euphony. This padapatha, designed for scholastic and mnemonic purposes, stands in opposition to the samhitapatha or "continuous recitation". Such a phrase as : *a tveta ni sidatendram abhi pra gayata* becomes in padapatha : *a tu a ita ni sidata indram abhi pra gayata.*

§ 6. Tradition itself recognises certain interpolations, such as the Valakhilya, a group of 11 hymns inserted in mandala VIII. They form part of the khila, "supplements", series of verses which have not been admitted into the Samhita, either because they belonged to a different recension, or because they were composed or discovered after the codification. In the manuscripts they are sometimes set apart, but more often they are attached to various parts of the Samhita, and the Vedic texts ascribe to them the same dignity as the Veda (Oldenberg, Schefteloitz).

THE RELATIVE DATES OF THE HYMNS

§ 7. The Samhita is shown by many indications to consist of fragments of different origins and dates, despite the apparent uniformity of tone. The bulk of the work, and that part which is linguistically the most ancient, consists of the "family" books, II to VII, which have, as remarked above, a common system of arrangement. Each of them is attributed to a priestly family : in order, Gritsamada, Vishvamitra, Vamadeva, Atri, Bharadvaja, Vasishtha. The position of book IX is subject to controversy : Wust considers it the most ancient, except that its admission to the collection necessarily followed that of books II to VII, since it is composed of hymns to Soma previouly eliminated from the family books. It is usually considered that book VIII goes together with II—VII, whose system of ordering it imitates ; its relations with IX are not so clear. Book I consists of a first part (hymns 1—50) on the same plan as VIII, and a second part which is much more recent. All authors agree on the later character of book X, which is confirmed by many kinds of indications of form and content. As in so many Indian works, the additions have thus been made at the head and at the tail.

A long period of time may have separated these various layers and must have separated I—IX from X. But it is necessary to distinguish, in principle, the date of incorporation in the Samhita from the date of composition : it is possible that the Samhita brought together texts composed at a much earlier date. In detail these problems are insoluble, although ingenious attempts (Arnold, and more recently Wust) have been made to estimate the relative antiquity of each hymn on the basis of a criterion of style. The researches of Bloomfield have shown how far the Rigveda is made up of formulae which are repeated : it is tangle of interconnections. If, as all the evidence suggests, the material was developed in many places over long periods of time, there may also have been a levelling down, a process of assimilation by mutual borrowing.

THE AUTHORS

§ 8. The Rishis to whom tradition attributes the "vision" are in some cases mentioned in the hymns themselves. It must be remembered, however, that the name of an author may have been read into some word or other occurring in the verse. In any case these names tell us nothing about the persons they refer to ; at most it happens that the index attributes two hymns to the same author. We should expect that the cycles of Vedic families and of Brahmanic castes should repeat themselves. The exercise of the poetic function was a family matter, and was thus hereditary. There must have been a body of priest-bards, the bahvricha, "carriers of many verses", attached to a princely family, and the Rigveda must be the result of the collection or at least a selection from their works. The Rigvedic hymn is not only a song in praise of a divinity : it is a composition made with a view to pleasing a prince, written in a certain style, subject to the requirements of a public competition, of which it mentioned the culminating event. There are traces of angling for benevolence, especially in the danastuti, "praise for a gift", by which at the end of a hymn the author thanks the prince for the gifts he has obtained and outlines a panegyric (narashamsi). It has been asked whether these parts were not added later : the answer is negative (Oldenberg, Patel). It was perhaps these old praises of kings which served as the model for the panegyric of the god, and

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they show the importance of the song of praise, sacred or profane, as one of the principal sources of Indian literary activity.

THE CONTENT : THE DIVINE PANEGYRIC

§ 9. The Rigveda was compiled in response to literary, or if it is preferred archaeological, rather than liturgical needs. It is an anthology. It could almost be said without paradox that the work stands outside the Vedic religion. Unlike the others it does not claim to be a practical manual. The hymn is carefully composed and often learned, containing a prelude in the form of an emphatic exhortation, a refrain at the end, a prayer, and a phrase emphasising the transition from the oral rite to the practical rite. The body of the hymn consists in praise of the divinity, prayers, supplications, curses, but all in mythical episodes referred to in an allusive way, remnants of an immense literature of legend which must have existed in an oral form long before (Sieg). The hymns are addressed to the divinities, but with very different frequency : to Indra most of all (250 hymns), then next to Agni (200), and finally to deified objects or ideas.

DESCRIPTION OF RITUAL

§ 10. With the description of the physical aspect of the god, and the usual series of entreaties, the hymns to Agni and to Soma combine a lyrical exposition, external to the ritual sequence, of the acts relative to the lighting of the fire, the oblation, the squeezing and the offering of Soma.

Others have a clearer purpose, going beyond the requirements of the soma sacrifice, which is the principal object of the collection.

Thus the Apri, propitiation, hymns, which were used (in a secondary place, according to Hertel) in the animal sacrifice ; so also the verses on the horse sacrifice. There are also prayers having reference to domestic rituals, in particular a hymn for marriages (X.85), which starts out from the marriage of the sun and moon, the prototype of human marriages. There is a group of hymns relating to funerals and burial rites, forming a little Samhita (X. 14-18).

More often the ritual prayers are included within a magical setting. It is the magical incantation which not only forms the basis of love charms, formulae of inauguration, and imprecations against evil spirits, but also the origin of some poems in which the artistic development conceals the original intention, such as the hymn to the frogs (which some have wrongly supposed to be satirical), which is nothing else than a charm for rain (VII. 103), or the hymn to the ruined gambler (X. 34), which is intended to free the victim from the evil spirits in the dice.

THE HISTORICAL HYMNS

§ 11. It is with a certain hesitation that one picks out from the mythical narratives certain passages which appear to contain historical information. Actually no element of fact has been extracted from the stratum of myth. But probably there are the rudiments of history in VII. 33, the apotheosis of the priest Vasishtha, in VI. 27, were the victory of Abhichayamana and of Srinjaya is referred to, and especially in VII. 18, which narrates in broad outline, and not without some comical detail, the Battle of the Ten Kings, in which Sudas, aided by Indra, puts to flight the kings allied against him and drowns their troops in the Parushni.

THE COSMOGONIC HYMNS

§ 12. In the more recent parts of the collection, especially in book X, the panegyric addressed to creative gods takes the form of a cosmogony. The theme of the genesis of the world is dealt with in various ways : the origin of the gods X.72, the hymn "to the unknown god", X, 121, the world deriving from the primordial sacrifice, X. 82, and in more detail from the parts of the body of a primeval Man sacrificed by the gods, X. 90, and finally X. 129, one of the most remarkable poems of the Veda, in which these speculative tendencies have found their most striking expression.

§ 13. Sometimes the cosmogonic theme is to be discerned in the form of riddles, riddles with a naturalistic basis (Henry), but including ritualistic symbols : hymn I.164 is nothing but a long series of puzzles, foreshadowing what later theological controversy was to know as brahmodya, "Brahmanical discussions". These may derive from an ancient Indo-European custom, an initiation test.

In a more general sense, certain problems bring to a focus an ethical lesson : X.117, urging a man to make gifts, sets forth general moral teaching in the manner of the sententious poetry of later ages. In the guise of paying homage to the Word, hymn X.71 gives instructions for oratorical contests.

It is often said that there is secular poetry in the Veda. Strictly speaking, there is none, except so far as certain secular themes, songs and refrains, and humorous episodes, have been susceptible of application to religious purposes. In fact everything is subjected to religious norms, with the double aim of praising the divinity in sufficiently exalted terms, and of fulfilling the worldly conditions of the priest's work, the recompense for which was the dakshina, the often fabulous "honorarium", which the Vedic bards went to such lengths to obtain.

HYMNS IN DIALOGUE FORM

§ 14. The most curious of the Vedic compositions are the dialogues (samvada) which occur in the recent portions, more especially book X. The dialogue may be no more than a literary form of the panegyric: thus in IV. 42 Indra and Varuna, eulogising themselves alternately, seem to be disputing the pre-eminence. Normally, however, the intention is less envious. Some students have regarded them as ballads (Geldner), as cult dramas or mimes (Schroeder), the first indications of the Indian theatre, or simply as epic recitation (Charpentier). It is possible that they are the remnants of chanted narratives (akhyana) which originally included prose interspersed with verse passages, the verses containing the dialogue, a type of mixed composition which has been favoured at various stages of Indian literary history (Oldenberg). The prose narrative, which was perhaps improvised, has been lost, and the verses alone remain: whence the summary and elliptic character of many of these dialogue hymns.

§ 15. Instances which may be mentioned are the dialogue between the ascetic Agastya and his wife Lopamudra (I.179), in which the wife, wearied by her husband's prolonged continence, invites him to desist; the theme of the union of the mortal and the goddess, related in the characters of the nymph Urvashi and the king Pururavas (X.95); a kind of satirical play (X.86) between Indira, wife of the God, and a monkey, Vrishakapi; and the moving dialogue between the first man, Yama, and his sister Yami, in which the alternate stanzas are more closely linked than in the other dialogues: Yami invites her brother to commit incest in order to perpetuate their race, Yama refuses, and after pressing her request Yami resigns herself.

POETIC FORM

§ 16. The stanza generally forms a unity; successive stanzas may be connected by a "concatenation". Sound associations, vowel harmonies, etc., are frequent. The emphatic style, inclined to hyperbole, abounds in peculiarities which we regard as ellipses, grammatical breaks (anacoluthon), and daring constructions and expressions, Comparisons are of a simple character, and are less often made explicit than included in a noun compound, or presented as a metaphor. The metaphor, the force of which is sometimes confirmed by the data on ritualism, is an organic element of the language much more than a deliberate ornament: the poet plays with the two meanings of the word, because it allows him to think at the same time on two parallel planes. The Rigveda gives the appearance of anticipating the rhetorical word-play of classical times ; in fact it is engaged in developing a system of symbols in which the language is put at the service of a subtle mythico-ritualistic imagination. Almost all Indian literature has an esoteric side, the Rigveda most of all.

§ 17. The style is however in no way uniform. Book X has its own mannerisms, the hymns devoted to each god their own charm, and in fact it may be said that there is "a history of the style of the Rigveda" (Wust). As to literary value, it is highly variable. Very many of the hymns are merely strings of formulae, but some, despite all the constraints which weigh upon them, show remarkable vigour and originality, and classical India never regained the intensity of expression of some of these old poems.

STATE OF THE TEXT

§ 18. The text which we possess is that of the school of Shakala, which owes its name to the master Shakalya. Others however have existed : we have some meagre data on that of Vashkala. Everything leads us to think that the divergences were small.

Form the moment it was given final form, the text was preserved with extraordinary fidelity. Supported by the pada recitation (see § 5.) and by the more complex methods of recitation which were added to it, preserved by the rigorous phonetic description of which the tradition is set forth in the Rikpratishakya (see § 93), the Rigveda has come down to us in the same state in which the compilers codified it, without an alteration, without a variant. The lessons of what is called the Kashmirian version, for example the verses or richaka preserved in the Katha texts (Schroeder), add nothing, except at most to the khila (see § 6.) The manuscripts, which are generally recent, agree in providing a uniform text, the integrity of which, far from being compromised, is reinforced by the oral tradition.

INTERPRETATION

§ 19. The interpretation of the Rigveda to Indian views rests primarily on the elements of commentary contained in the Brahmanas, on the Nirukta (see § 97), and then on the series of Bhashya, "commentaries" (literally "oral texts"), which were compiled in the Middle Ages : those of Madhava, Skandasvamin, Venkatamadhava, and best known though certainly not the best, that of Sayana, a southern Brahman, in the XIVth century. The tradition has been revived in the XIXth century, with the neo-Vedic movement. None of these commentaries should be neglected : they rest in part on ancient traditions, and it would be superficial to reject the authority of Sayana on the pretext that he presents a mass of naive explanations, contradictions and bad etymologies. What it is nevertheless permissible to doubt is whether they reflect the thought of the hymns : we discern in them too many anachronisms, too much Hinduisation. Despite the reaction marked by Pischel and the *Vedische Studien*, progress in the interpretation of the Rigveda is made most often by disregarding the indigenous glosses. This progress has been the work of western science : the first impetus was given by the teaching of Eugene Burnouf, and down to our own day an uninterrupted series of scholars have continued the interpretation of the text, which remains the most difficult which has come down to us from ancient India. The work involves comparative study of the data on ritual, the results of comparative grammar, mythology, ethnology, and the study of the Avesta. Translations, lexicons and commentaries have multiplied. But numerous passages remain as obscure as ever, either because the meanings of important words are unknown, or because meaningless rhetoric—though this is sometimes too easily blamed—has masked the real thought.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER TEXTS

§ 20. Considerable passages from the Rigveda are found in the other Samhitas, the Sama, Yajur and Atharva. Great numbers of mantras from the Rigveda are quoted in all the Vedic treatises. Either the reproduction is literal, proving the authority which the Riksamhita enjoyed—a growing authority, if it is true that adhesion to the text seems to become stricter in more recent times (Oldenberg) ; or we have variants, which, very irregularly distributed, witness, as Oldenberg has shown, to the excellence of the Rigvedic teaching. A study of these variants reveals that the Rigvedic tradition was already of some antiquity when the other collections were made.

THE CHARACTER OF THE RIGVEDA

§ 21. We have referred to the literary rather than practical character of the work. The ritual, which was established long afterwards, drew freely on the hymns and verses, with little regard to their original meaning. Put to this new use, the Rigveda became the book of the hotri (see § 193).

On the other hand, the mythology of the Rigveda is no longer the common mythology of Vedism : it is older and at the same time not directly ancestral but collateral. Everything is subordinated to a consciously elaborated system of classificatory symbolism, to which Bergaigne's work, even if it cannot all now be accepted, does provide the key : a network of correspondences between the human sacrifice and its divine prototyye, which itself is connected with the natural phenomena of the sky and the atmosphere—such, broadly, is the background to which the Rishis unwearyingly adapted their formulae. The cult also reproduced certain aspects of the social organisation. It is the complex interweaving of these diverse planes, naturalistic, mythical, ritual, social, that defines the thought of the Rigveda. All the forms of symbolism contribute to these representations : numerical symbols are to be noticed, the "mythological arithmetic" of Bergaigne, (in particular the number 7 in opposition to 1 or dividing a unity) (Benda).

§ 22. Such a work necessarily required long elaboration. Without going so far as to regard the Rigveda as the poetry of the later and inferior members of a school, it is evident that it implies other literary activity : the allusive character of the text puts this beyond doubt. On the other hand, the evidence which it provides is limited, concerned as it is almost exclusively (at least if we had not book X to change the perspective a little) with the solemn forms of the cult, which can never have been matters of common experience. It is the manual of a religious aristocracy. The part played by artifice, on all the different planes, is considerable, and aesthetic values (predominance of variations on the "beautiful"), (Oldenberg) have tended to make themselves felt.

THE DATE

§ 23. Calculations of relative chronology alone can be made : the Rigveda is older than all the other Vedic texts because it does not presuppose any of them, and all the others more or less directly presuppose it. It may be considerably earlier, at least in relation to the prose texts (though this has been doubted, as by Chattopadhyaya), since the archaic character which separates the Rigveda from later literature can hardly be accounted for by simple differences of style or of level of social evolution. If the compilation of the Rigveda took place at a time near the Brahmanas, the composition of the hymns was very much earlier. When was it?

The whole of the Vedic literature can be placed between two dates, both unhappily inexact. It was composed as a whole before the Buddhist doctrine was preached ; and on the other hand its beginnings were contemporary with or a little later than the entry of the Aryans into India. The various strata of the texts must be arranged in this interval. The attempt to do this made long ago by Max Muller, the basis of which has often been questioned, remains justified in principle. Now if it is assumed that the entry of the Aryans took place about the 15th—16th century B.C. the hymns must be placed about this date. The evidence of the Mitanni documents tends to support this view, while the hypothesis, if it is admitted, of an Indo-European Mohenjo-Daro tells against it.

§ 24. On the other hand the close relation of the Rigveda with the Avesta inclines us to bring the date lower (with Hertel), if at least we were sure that the Avestic gathas, so similar in form to the Veda, were not earlier than the Sixth or seventh century. However, in addition to the fact that this date is very uncertain, it is quite sure that the development of the Vedic literature requires a far longer time than this allows.

Such moderate views as these on the antiquity of the Veda are far from universally accepted. In the XIXth century such scholars as Tilak spoke of 6,000 years before the Christian era, and others proclaimed still earlier dates. On the basis of astronomical data ingeniously interpreted (an allusion to the summer solstice coinciding with the sun in the constellation Phalguni), Jacobi was led to date two hymns of the collection in the 5th millennium B. C., while (uncertain) data from Jyotisha enabled Colebrooke to date the arrangement of the Veda and its calendar in the XIVth century : tradition places the life of Vyasa at the beginning of the Kaliyuga, that is about 3,000 B.C.

SPECIMENS

§ 25. A type of the naturalistic poem is the hymn to Parjanya (V. 83), which describes the tropical storm :

> Address with this song the mighty Parjanya, praise him, win him with your reverence ! The bull, bellowing at the perennial waters, deposits his seed in the plants, like a germ.
>
> He strikes down the trees, he destroys the demons ; the whole world fears his mortal weapon : even the innocent man flees before the male god, when Parjanya, thundering, slays the impious.
>
> Like a charioteer, urging on the horses with the whip, he makes visible his messengers of rain. From afar rise the roarings of the lion, when Parjanya makes the clouds rain.
>
> The winds blow, the lightnings fly, the plants open, the sun swells up. The sap rises in all nature when Parjanya fertilises the earth with his seed.
>
> He under whose law the earth bows low, under whose law the hoofed animals snort, under whose law are the plants and all their forms, O Parjanya, bestow on us your powerful protection.
>
> Please us, O Marut, with rain from the sky, swell the

> waves of the male horse ! Come here with your thunder, diverting your waters ! You are the Asura, our father.
>
> Roar, thunder, deposit your seed, fly everywhere in the chariot of your waves ! Overturn and empty your opened water-bag ! May the mountains and valleys be made level !
>
> Raise and overturn the vast water-pot ! May the banks be swept away and spread afar ! Soak sky and earth with your melted butter, give the cows a place where they may quench their thirst !
>
> O Parjanya, when roaring and thundering you strike the impious, the universe rejoices, and all that is on the earth.
>
> You have rained your rain, now check the rain ! You have made the deserts capable of being crossed. You have created plants for the nourishment of men ; in return you receive loyalty from them.

§ 26. A type of the ritualistic poem is the funeral hymn (X. 18), a prayer to Death, which has taken its victim, to leave the living in peace :

> Follow, O Death, that path there which is yours, distinct from the path of the gods ! I speak to you, you who hear : do not harm our children and our men !

The living are asked to purify themselves and cease mourning :

> When you return, confusing the footsteps of Death, carrying farther your longer life, swelled up with progeny and riches, become pure and holy, O worshippers !
>
> May the living here be separated from the dead. Our appeal to the gods today was successful : here we begin again to dance and laugh, carrying farther our longer life :

The dead is separated from the world of the living :

> I set up this barrier for the living, that no other from among them may go to that limit ! That they may live a full hundred autumns, let them place this stone between themselves and Death !

A longer life is asked for the living :

> As the days follow in order, as the seasons faithfully follow the seasons, so order their lives, O Regulator, that he who comes after may not abandon him who went before !
>
> Go to the summit of your life, you who choose to live long ! Concert together, however many you may

> be! May Tvashtri, of the good creations, be pleased to make you live long!
>
> Here are women who are not widows, who have good husbands; let them come in again with the butter of unction! Without tears and without complaints, let these wives in their finery first mount the bed!

But the widow is also invited to remain on earth:

> Rise up, O woman, for the world of the living! You lie beside a man whose breath has departed. Here you have entered marriage with a man who has taken your hand and asks for you.

This husband, perhaps the brother of the dead man, takes from the corpse the bow which had been given to it to hold:

> I take the bow from the hand of the dead man, so that dominance, fame and valour may remain among us. You there, we here, may we be able as heroes to defeat every attack, every ambush!

Farewell to the dead and invocation to the Earth:

> Creep back to earth, your mother, that beneficent earth with immense domains, virgin soft as wool to him who makes rich payment! May she save you from the bosom of the non-existent!
>
> Form a vault, O Earth, and do not crush him, admit him freely and shelter him well! As a mother her son, cover him, O Earth, with the skirt of your garment!
>
> When she shall have formed a vault, may the earth remain thus, may a thousand pillars hold her up! May that house flow with butter for him, and always serve him as a shelter!
>
> I heap up the earth about you, and place the clod of earth thus. May I not be murdered! May the Fathers maintain this column, may Yama build a dwelling for you here!

Words of the dead man:

> In the decline of the day they buried me like the feathers of an arrow: as a horse with reins, I have restrained my falling voice.

§ 27. The creation of the world (X. 129):

> Being was not, and non-being was not at that time. There was no space, nor firmament above it. What could move itself? Where, and under whose keeping? Was there deep water, or bottomless water?
>
> Neither was there death at that time, nor non-death, no sign distinguished night from day. The One breathed

without breath, sustained by itself, other than it nothing existed.

In the beginning darkness covered the darkness, all that could be seen was indistinguishable water. Enclosed in the void, the One, agreeing to be, took birth through the power of heat.

It became first desire, which was the first seed of thought. Searching with reflection in their souls, the Sages found in non-being the bond of being.

Their cord was stretched diagonally : which was above, which was below ? There were carriers of seed, there were virtues : below was spontaneous Energy, above was the Gift.

Who truly knows, who could announce it here : whence is it born, whence comes this creation ? The gods are later than this creative act : who knows from whence it emanates ?

This creation, whence it emanates, if it was made or was not made—he who watches over it in the highest heaven, undoubtedly he knows, or if he does not know it ?

(b) THE YAJURVEDA

THE SCHOOLS AND THE RECENSIONS

§ 28. The Yajurveda, or more exactly the Samhitas of the Yajurveda, are five in number, four relating to the Black Yajurveda—that is to say, according to the traditional explanation, which is not necessarily authentic, the Veda in which formulae and prayers are associated with elements of commentary—and the last to the white Yajurveda, in which formulae and prayers are almost "pure", free from prose Brahmana. The five are :

(1) The Kathaka, properly the Charayaniya-Katha-Samhita, the text in 5 grantha and 53 sthanaka, representing the principal recension of the Katha school ;

(2) The Kapishthalala-(Katha)-Samhita in 8 ashtaka and 48 adhyaya, another recension of the same school, of which the text been preserved only in part ;

(3) The Maitrayanisamhita, in 4 kanda and 54 prapathaka, of the school of the Maitrayaniya ;

(4) The Taittiriyasamhita, in 7 kanda and 44 prapathaka (the shortest division being by groups of 50 words), of the Taittiriya school and more particularly of the Apastambin ;

(5) The Vajasaneyisamhita in 40 adhyaya ; it takes its

name from the master Yajnavalkya, whose patronymic was Vajasaneya. There are two recensions, that of the Kanva and that of the Madhyamdina.

Apart from the presence (in 1-4) or absence (in 5) of prose passages, these Samhitas resemble each other, though it is not possible to reestablish a prototype, except in certain special cases (the yajus of the Ashwamedha, Bhawe). Katha and Maitrayani are closely allied, Kapishthala being only a variant of the Katha, and according to tradition depend on the Charaka school, while the Taittiriya were divided into Aukhiya and Khandikiya.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER TEXTS

§ 29. These Samhitas abound in mantras borrowed from the Rigveda, often with considerable changes. The series of verses called yajyanuvakya come literally from passages in the Rigveda. As with all the religious literature of India, we have to deal with strata of different ages: the yajus of the Ashwamedha, for example, form a kind of appendix.

While the explanatory portions in prose represent the first specimens of the literature of the Brahmanas (see § 52.), the formulae and prayers are in many cases almost as archaic as those of the Rigveda. The Yajurveda is placed sometimes after, sometimes before the Atharva, before the Sama, and in any case after the Rigveda.

§ 30. As for the order of the Samhitas of which it consists, it is generally admitted that the White Yajurveda is younger than the Black: the arrangement itself, the connections with the Rigveda, and certain linguistic characters show this. It is difficult to pronounce on the respective positions of three principal texts of the Black Yajus: Schroeder has argued that the Katha, and above all the Maitrayani, is the earliest, as shown by habits of language and accentuation which are explicable in part as archaisms. Keith believes in the contemporaneity of the three Samhitas.

Padapatha (see § 5.) have been preserved for the Taittiriya, the Maitrayani and the Vajasaneyi, and modern commentaries for the Taittiriya (Bhattabhaskaramishra, 12th century; Sayana, 14th century), and for the Vajasaneyi (Uvata of uncertain date; Mahidhara, XVIth century), which are extremely valuable.

THE FORM

§ 31. If we set aside the prose commentary on the one hand, and the prayers of the Rigvedic origin on the other, and also some rarer elements (for example the vivid, archaic "invocations" scattered among the prose), the characteristic material of the Yajurveda is the yajus, "sacrificial formula". It consists of phrases, ordinarily in prose, which serve to invoke either a divinity in the character of a ritual instrument, or more often a cult object, an oblation, etc. By means of these invocations the object is given an esoteric name endowed with a sacred character. The yajus describe briefly what can be done through them, urge the reciter to act, or urge another object to enter into connection with him (Oldenberg). They also set forth the effect which can be realised by a rite, a prayer. "The waters are united with the waters, the plants with the sap : unite, rich men, with those who move, the gentle with the gentle !" "You are the right arm of Indra of the thousand points, of the hundred flashes." "By the impulsion of his power, by his exaltation he has raised me up, then Indra has made my enemies humble by humiliation." "May I see the sun, the light for all men !" You are the guard of Vishnu, the guard of the sacrificer : turn your protection towards me !" Identifications play a great part : "you are the winds", says one verse, addressing the cows which with their dung purify the earth as do the winds. There are also some conventional syllables, the use of which was later developed by Tantrism.

§ 32. There are magical elements, set forth in precise prose, with simple syntax, and an often fantastic vocabulary. The elementary rhetoric of these passages makes use of parallelism and alliteration (Oldenberg).

The more ancient parts of the yajus appear in the descriptions of the sacrifices of the full and new moon, and also in the soma ritual. A more recent stratum is the ritual of the fire-altar. These yajus are the concern of the adhvaryu (see § 193) ; the ritual Veda *par excellence*, the Yajurveda is his book of prayers, except that the verses taken from the Rigveda remain the preserve of the hotri. Some yajus take on the appearance of litanies ; the best known is the *Shatarudriya*, the "hundred beings of Rudra".

THE CONTENT

§ 33. The order of the mantras, which the prose commentary follows approximately, corresponds to the order of the ceremonial. Here, for example, is the list of contents of the Taittiriya-Samhita (m.=mantra : b.=prose Brahmana).

I. The sacrifice of the full and of the new moon (m.). The sacrifice of the soma (m.) ; the victim for Agni and Soma (m.) ; the cups of soma (m.). The preparation and adoration of the fire (m. and b.). The part of the sacrificer in the sacrifices of the full and of the new moon (m. and b.). The vajapeya (m.). The consecration of the king with the four-monthly rites (m. and b.). The sautramani (m.).

II. The optional forms of vegetable and animal sacrifices

(m. and b.). The sacrifice of the full and of the new moon (b.). The sacrifice to the ancestral spirits (m.).

III. Supplement to the sacrifice of the soma (m. and b.). Occasional and optional sacrifices (m. and b.). Various supplements (m. and b.).

IV. The construction of the fire-altar (m.) ; the placing of the fire in the cauldron (ukha) ; the preparation of the place for the fire ; the five layers of bricks ; the offerings to Rudra ; the stacking of the bricks.

V. Portions of Brahmana corresponing to the preceding mantras ; in addition, mantras for the horse sacrifice.

VI. The sacrifice of the soma (b.). The dakshina (b.).

VII. The ekaha and ahina sacrifices (b.). The horse sacrifice (m. and b.). The dvadasharatra (b.). The sacrificial sessions (m.) ; the gavamayana (b.).

The latter part of the Vajasaneyi contains some prayers which have no equivalent in the other Samhitas : such as some funeral verses, prayers for the sarvamedha and for the pravargya, a curious enumeration of the types of individuals (classified according to occupation) who are to be immolated at the time of the human sacrifice, a version of the hymn to Purusha in the Rigveda, and finally several passages of the type of the Upanishads.

(c) THE SAMAVEDA

FORM AND ARRANGEMENT

§ 34. The Samaveda has come to us in three recensions, that of Kauthuma, which is the popular one, that of Ranayaniya, which appears to have been identical with the former, at least as regards the Samhita, and that of Jaiminiya or Talavakara. This last contains larger collections of melodies than the Kauthuma, while the verses are less numerous, differently arranged, and subject to some sound changes. The text of the Samaveda was commented on by Sayana in the 14th century. In the Kauthuma recension it consists of the following elements :

1. The Samhita proper, comprising the archika (or purvarchika), "(first) group of verses", the aranyaka (or aranyakasamhita), "text of the forest", a sort of appendix to the previous part, and finally the uttararchika, "last group of verses".

2. Four gana, collections of "chants" : (grama-) geya, aranya (geya), uha and uhya (or rahasya).

Numbering 1,810, the verses are borrowed for the most part from the Rigveda, often with variants of a verbal character or due to the necessities of musical transcription. They belong to the group of verses of complex metre (pragatha), those of the VIIIth and IXth Mandalas, which from the start were the concern of the udgatri (Oldenberg), or "singer", and had their special place in the soma ritual. In the archika the verses are composed of isolated lines, chosen on the principle that to each one there must correspond a determinate "air", a saman or "melody" : these verses or rik are, the Hindus say, the matrices or yoni of the melody and are arranged according to the metre or the divinity : it is a collection for use by the schools. The uttararchika on the other hand is a practical manual for the use of officiants at the rituals : it provides in the order of the ceremonial the texts of all the tiercets (tricha) of which the first line has been given in principle in the archika, and which are to serve as the bases of the "chanted complexes", stotra, used in the course of the sacrifice and characterised by the use of one tone. It appears that the uttararchika was compiled later than the archika (Oldenberg).

§ 35. The Samaveda proper thus appears as a sort of handbook. In fact in part it is no more than the index to a handbook. The most interesting part would have been the melody : unfortunately the melodies of the age of the Samhita have not been preserved. It is only at a relatively late period that there was recorded in the gana the musical notation in terms of syllables, and more often with figures written above the line.

In order to suit the text to the requirements of the melody it was interspersed with stobha, exclamatory syllables or words, or sometimes short phrases, which have a magical or mystical rather than a semantic value (Van der Hoogt).

The first two gana give the melodies which "are to be sung in the village" and those which "are to be sung in the forest" (that is to say, too sacred or dangerous to be heard by human communities) : they correspond to the "words" of the archika and follow the same order. The last two gana (the uttaragana), which constitute the uttararchika, like it follow the order of the ceremonial.

THE SAMAN

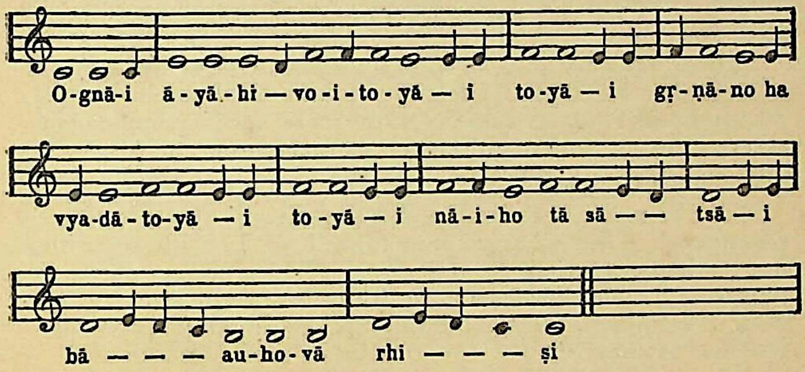
§ 36. Here is a specimen of the musical notation of a verse of the Samaveda (1,156.5), together with its stobha (which take the form of the syllables *dada*, whence the term "ritual dadaiasm" given to this proceeding by Faddegon) :

2 r 1 2 2 1 r 2 2 3 5 2 2
/pra vo da3da/ au3ho/ /indro dada au/3ho/ /ya234ma/ da3nam/
2 1 2 3 1 r 3 4 2 2
/hari da3da/ au3ho/ /ashvo dada/ au3ho/ /ya234ga/ ya3ta/

1/25

The actual text is : pra va indraya madanam haryashvaya. gayata.

Here, on the other hand, after Burnell and Caland, is the transcription in the key of G of the Gautamasya parka (Samaveda I. la) :


O-gnā-i ā - yā - hi — vo - i - to - yā — i to - yā — i gṛ - ṇā - no ha
vya-dā - to-yā — i to - yā — i nā - i - ho tā sā — — tsā — i
bā — — — au-ho - vā rhi — — — ṣi

§ 37. As referring to the chanted prayer, the word saman occurs already in the Rigveda. The true sense appears to be "propitiation". The samans, of which tradition knows a very large number, bear names drawn in general from those of the Rishis, such as Gautama, Naudhasa, Shakala. They derive in part from popular songs, and hence carry certain magical qualities which are referred to in the literature and are confirmed by many indications : this magical air has brought the Samaveda to a certain extent into disrepute (cf. Manu). The samans are divided into five or seven groups. They are sung on seven notes and three degrees (octaves ?), to the accompaniment of movements of the fingers.

(d) THE ATHARVAVEDA

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE TEXT

§ 38. The Atharvaveda is a collection of hymns and spells in twenty books or kanda. The subdivisions, which are in part modern, are called "lectures" (prapathaka), "recitations" (anuvaka), and "decads" (dashati). Altogether there are 731 sections and nearly 6,000 verses. The first eighteen books, which form the Atharvaveda proper, are divided into three groups :

(a) I-VII, containing short hymns (less than 20 verses) on various subjects. The books are arranged in ascending order of length, except VII, and each consists of hymns of the same length : thus Book I has hymns of 4 verses, Book II of 5. Book VII consists of the hymns of 1 verse, and some have regarded it as a sort of appendix.

(b) VIII-XII contain long hymns on various subjects. The books are of about the same size, and the hymns are classified according to length, but not without exceptions.

(c) XIII-XVIII contain hymns classified according to subject, each book dealing with a separate subject. These books, except XVIII, are arranged in descending order of length.

There remain XIX, a supplement the hymms of which, if arrangement had been systematic, would have been divided among Books I-XVIII : and XX, a more recent supplement, which consists almost entirely of extracts from the Rigveda, and particularly from the 8th Mandala.

The borrowings from the Rik are otherwise considerable : one-seventh of the Atharva comes from the Rik, with or without variants, especially from Book X. The variants derive in part from the defective state in which the Atharvaveda has been transmitted. But some variants are authentic, and reveal attempts to adapt the ancient formulae to new purposes.

THE RECENSIONS AND THE AUTHORS

§ 39. Two schools have left texts : that of the Shaunaka (the name is also known as that of an author of sutras) is the commonly accepted one. That of the Paippalada—also called the Kashmirian recension, because the only known manuscript was found in Kashmir—is arranged very differently and contains many variants, some amounting to profound alterations, and many new passages. Often the Shaunaka text contains no parallel. The linguistic utilisation of this important recension still remains to be carried out.

According to tradition, many books of the Atharvaveda are attributed to such or such mythical author : some isolated hymns are also attributed to authors, but no exact information can be derived from this.

Sayana commented on the Atharvaveda, but in a mediocre manner and leaving many gaps. The state of the text leaves much to be desired : it is clear that at an early period the Atharvan material lacked authoritative warrant and floated, so to speak, on the margin of the canon. We know in any case that the Atharva was given the status of the "fourth Veda" only gradually and at a late period, that some schools have never recognised it, and that in every way its dignity is less than that of the other Vedas. Like the Rik it possesses a padapatha, but of far inferior quality.

THE CONTENT : THE MAGICAL PRAYERS

§ 40. Books I-VII, which form a unity, contain mainly magical prayers for specific objects. Solemn hymns of the type of the Rigveda are few, and often adapted to magical requirements, "Atharvanised", as it may be said. These compositions can be classified as "popular poetry" (Bloomfield), as opposed to the priestly work of the Rigveda and the Atharvaveda, VIII-XVIII. However, this distinction cannot be pressed too far, and a number of these prayers show an elaboration comparable if not superior to that of the hymns : they may perhaps owe their poetic form to a religious cult. They have given their name to the collection, if it is true that the word atharvan, the designation of a prehistoric priest of the fire cult (the athravan of the Avesta), individualised into a divine entity, acquired the sense of "magical formula", in particular the formula of white magic, as opposed to angiras which designates black magic : whence the composite name Atharvangiras, an ancient name of the Atharvaveda.

§ 41. These prayers could be divided into several categories, without very rigid boundaries : charms for long life (ayushya), to cure sickness or demonic possession (bhaishajya), curses upon demons, sorcerers, enemies (abhicharika), love charms (strikarman), charms to bring about concord (ammanasya) and prosperity (paushtika), charms relating to royalty (rajakarman) or to the Brahmanical power, and expiatory prayers (prayaschitta). The corresponding rituals are set forth in a more recent text, the Kaushika (see § 89).

In these works the gods play hardly any part, except as background. The prayers have little connection with the official cult or society. They are a matter between the sorcerer and his client, who are often the chaplain (purohita) and the king. So far as it is a collection of charms, the Atharvaveda is rather a manual for the laity, the Kshatriya, and from certain points of view a manual of State.

The magical system presupposes a complex world of interrelations, and a rudimentary but rigorous causality. From the anthropological point of view the collection has much importance, especially in view of its great antiquity. Among other things, it gives us the first outlines of Indian medicine.

In some hymns, such as the prayer to Varuna regarded as overseeing the human conscience (IV.16), an imposing prelude in solemn phraseology gives way to the most commonplace sorcery.

THE CONTENT : BOOKS VIII-XII

§ 42. These books, which also form a unity, contain magical prayers like the former books. But in some cases they break out of the normal bounds of this style of composition, making use of certain literary developments : thus the hymn to (curative) plants, VIII.7, or the prayer for the house, IX.3.

If it were not for the evidence of the ritual, how could we tell that the hymn to the Earth (XII.1), that extraordinary work, in which the telluric forces are represented from a pantheistic standpoint in a most grandiose composition, was used to endow houses with stability, or rather to safeguard them against earth movements ?

§ 43. Other pieces, resembling certain Rigveda hymns on sacred attributes or instruments, are remaakable for verbal extravagance : such as the hymn to the Brahmanic porridge (XI.1). Some are entirely in the style of the sacrificial hymns, such as the hymn to the cow (X.9), the hymn to the remains of the ritual repast (XI.7), and the funerary prayers of Book X. Some are merely collections of puzzles ; but these, and some others which are Upanishads before their time, develop in mystical terms cosmogonic themes on a liturgical or mythological foundation. They constitute one of the distinctive elements in the Atharvaveda. Such are the hymn on the creation of the male (purusha) sacrificed by the gods (X.2), the glorification of the pillar, a solar symbol (X.7 and 8), that of the Brahman novice, also assimilated to the sun (XI.5), that of the breath (XI.4), or of the Viraj, the name of a poetical metre (VIII. 9 and 10) ; all these become creative principles. The philosophical appearance of these pieces is deceptive : they are no more and no less than incantations using an esoteric jargon.

THE CONTENT : BOOKS XIII-XX

§ 44. As regards both the nature and the form of their hymns, these books resemble VIII-XII more than I-VII. Book XIII, devoted to Rohita, develops, apart from its magical digressions, the theme of a cosmic principle in the form of the sun (see § 131). Book XIV contains prayers for marriages, XVIII for funerals. Book XV concerns the Vratya (§ 210), XVI contains obscure magical or ritual formulae, and XVII some elements of panegyric. We can ignore Book XIX, which as we have seen supplements the ancient Atharva, and in Book XX, we need only refer to the section called Kuntapa, containing some obscene hymns, and songs accompanying certain episodes of the cult, in particular the payment to the officiants. This whole of Book XX is in fact conceived as a technical treatise for the use of the officiant Brahmanacchamsin, as Caland has shown.

THE FORM

§ 45. The Atharvaveda contains many passages in prose, a prose often cadenced, a style earlier than that of the Brahmanas. But the greater part of the collection is in verse, though the versification is complex and loose, and is not easily brought within the common metrical rules. The language is definitely later than that of the Rigveda, but the style, marked by an expressive use of alliteration, repetition and various associations with magical purposes (Gonda), gives an impression of greater antiquity even than that of the Rigveda. The short prayers have a clarity and compactness which may attain a real intensity ; the final verse, presenting the wish as realised, at the same time gives the key to the veiled allusions in the body of the prayer.

THE DATE

§ 46. It is no more possible to date the Atharvaveda than the other Samhitas. If it is clear that the collection was made later, and perhaps long after the Rigveda, that the linguistic stratum is more recent, and that the geographical and social conditions, like the myths and the speculations, betray a more advanced state, it is still true that the ritual is very primitive, and that the prayers may well have existed side by side with those of the high cult, if not indeed before them. It is possible that when they were raised to the status of a Veda, a more "modern" form was imposed upon them. This is what Bloomfield expressed in another way when he emphasised the popular character of the collection. Thus it is wrong to speak of a period of the Atharvaveda. As to its relations with the other Samhitas, they remain obscure.

SPECIMENS

§ 47. To win the love of a woman (VI.8) :

> As the creeper holds the tree in a tight embrace, so embrace me : be my lover and do not depart from me !
>
> As the eagle which seizes its prey beats its wings at the sun, so I beat at your heart : be my lover and do not depart from me !
>
> As the sun during the same day encircles the sky and the earth, so I encircle your heart : be my lover and do not depart from me !

Against fever (V.22) :

> May Agni drive the Fever away from here—and also Soma, and the stone of the press, and Varuna of pure will, and the altar and the strewing and the flaming logs of wood ! May enmities disappear !
>
> You who make yellow all those whom you burn as in the fire, whom you consume—well, Fever, may you be without strength : flee away there, flee away below !
>
> That wrinkled Fever, daughter of wrinkles, red like a powder, throw it down, drive it away, O herb possessed of all powers !
>
> I send the Fever away to the lowest depths, but after

first paying it homage. May the chief of diarrhoeas go back to the Mahavrisha.

Its home it among the Mujavant, its home is among the Mahavrisha. Since your birth, O Fever, you have lived among the Balhika.

Fever of the colour of arsenic, full of evils, full of spots, go away, go and seek out the barbarous girl who wanders at large, let her feel your thunderbolt !

O Fever, go back to the Mujavant, or further still to the Balhika ; go and seek out the lewd slave and shake him well, O Fever !

Go away and stay with the Mahavrisha and Mujavant, your relatives, and eat them up ! Those are the lands which we assign to Fever ; ours do not belong to it.

You are not comfortable in a strange land. Although you are powerful, have pity on us ! Fever has found its proper occupation, it will go back among the Balhika.

So cold, then burning, you make us shake with coughing, terrible are your characteristics, O Fever ; spare us from them !

Do not take as allies the lingering sickness, nor the cough nor shortness of breath ; never come back again from where you have gone, O Fever, I implore you !

O Fever, with your brother the lingering sickness, with your sister the fit of coughing, with your cousin the itch, go away and stay with other people !

The fever which returns on the third day, and that which dies down on the third day, the persistent fever and the autumn fever, the cold, the burning, the summer fever and that of the rainy season, make them all disappear !

To the people of Gandhara and of Mujavant, to those of Anga and of Magadha, we send the Fever, like a messenger, like a treasure !

§ 48. This is the beginning of a hymn to Varuna (VI. 16) :

The great overseer of the worlds sees as if he were quite near. He who thinks to act by stealth—the gods know it, they know it all.

He who is at rest, he who walks or runs, who hides or escapes, what two men sitting together decide between themselves—King Varuna knows it, he is the third one with them.

And this earth is King Varuna's, and this sky raised above the distant frontiers. The two oceans are Varuna's sides—and in a drop of water also is he hidden.

And he who crawled through the sky to the other side would not escape Varuna, the King. His spies come down from the sky, with their thousand eyes they look across the earth.

All this King Varuna encompasses in his glance, all that is between the two worlds, all that is beyond. The winks of the eyes of men are counted by him ; he throws all things, like the gambler the dice.

(e) THE BRAHMANAS

INTRODUCTORY

§ 49. As their name indicates ("interpretation of the brahman", and at the same time by the "Brahmans" in their capacity as theologians : "collection of accepted interpretations"), the Brahmanas deal with the sacred science and expound (not rationally, but on the basis of mystical equivalents) the brahman. Tradition distinguishes two subjects : prescriptions (vidhi) and explanations (arthavada). They are collections of theological statements, arising from scholastic controversies, and relating, some to descriptions of the rites, and some to the stanzas of the Samhitas. Following the divisions of the cult, they are classified according to the Veda to which they refer : the Brahmanas of the Rigveda are intended for the purposes of the hotri, those of the Yajurveda for the use of the adhvaryu, and those of the Samaveda for the udgatri. Finally, in imitation of these, a Brahmana has been attached to the Atharvaveda. But while the Brahmanas of the Yajus closely follow the ritual, being based upon Samhitas which are themselves ritual, those of the other Vedas deviate from the sequence of their respective Samhitas. This variation permits a chronological inference : the Brahmanas began as appendices to the liturgical parts of the Samhitas, but later became independent.

§ 50. Most of them have been subjected to addition, if not rewriting. If, as some have supposed, there was an original Brahmana, the existing Brahmanas of the various schools do not help us to reconstruct it, in spite of their numerous points of agreement. They vary greatly in size : the short Brahmanas of the Samaveda are merely texts of Vedanga, sometimes no more than indexes. The verses or yajus are referred to by their initial words (pratika) when they are taken from the Samhita on which the Brahmana in question depends, otherwise they are quoted in full.

The greater number of Brahmanas were made the subject of commentaries in the course of the Middle Ages, among which a number are ascribed to Sayana (but that on the Satapatha Brahmana is by Harisvamin). It is a dead literature, which has not been continued. Theological explanations, so far as they were not included in the practical manuals, found a more systematic form in the Mimamsa, the true inheritor of the thought of the Brahmanas. Few of the authors are identifiable, despite the individuality of style and doctrine which marks certain passages.

THE BRAHMANAS OF THE RIGVEDA

§ 51. The most important is the Aitareyabrahmana, in 40 adhyaya and 8 "pentads" (panchika), the 7th and 8th and perhaps the 6th of these panchikas having been added later. The author is given as Mahidasa Aitareya. The bulk of the collection, originally the whole of it, deals with the soma sacrifices, the other sacrifices being reserved for a second Brahmana, the Kaushitaki or Shankhayana, in 30 adhyaya, which was compiled later and repeats the description of the soma (Keith). More systematic than the Aitareya, this Brahmana derives from a common tradition which must have been subject to later modification. The discussions of these two texts give the impression of someting "harmonious and refined" (S.Levi) ; they concern, in any case, concrete and technical matters. The Bramanical exaltation is to be noticed only in the more recent parts of the Aitareya.

THE BRAHMANAS OF THE BLACK YAJURVEDA

§ 52. The Brahmana portions of the Samhitas, which form more than half the whole, follow the mantra portions exactly, whether these are assembled in a series of verses, or, as is more often the case, they appear in compact groups. The Brahmana portions vary from one Samhita to another as much as, if not more than the mantra portions. In the Taittiriya school an independent text was compiled, the Taittiriyabrahmana, which follows the Samhita of the same name and like that text combines Brahmana and mantra. It contains supplements on the soma rites, on the rajasuya, etc., some expiatory practices, and some details on the human sacrifice. It is a voluminous work, in three kandas containing respectively 8, 8 and 12 prapathaka, and tradition attributes part of it to the Katha school.

THE SATAPATHABRAHMANA

§ 53. The most important and most extensive work in all this literature is the Satapathabrahmana, the "Brahmana of the hundred ways", consisting (whence its name) of 100 "lectures" (adhyaya). The text, which relates to the White Yajurveda, exists in the two known editions of this Veda, that of the Madhyamdina and that of the Kanva, the former in 14 kanda and the second in 17. The two editions show important verbal divergences, at least in the earlier parts. They imply an original, from which both derive by rearrangement (Caland). In the Madhyamdina edition, the first nine books form a continuous commentary on the first 18 sections of the Vajasaneyi ;

they are earlier than the last five books, which constitute a sort of supplement (Eggeling). The first five books also form a unity of a kind : in them mention is made of Yajnavalkya, who is stated at the end of the XIVth Book to be the author of the whole of the Shatapatha. In VIth to Xth, on the other hand, the authority is Shandilya.

Books I and II deal with vegetable offerings (haviryajna), and the Madhyamdina recension gives the place of honour to the rite of the Full and New Moons, which is the basis for all the other rites of the same type, while the Kanva recension, following the real sequence, begins with the Agnyadhana and the Agnihotra. There follows the exposition of the Soma sacrifice (including the animal sacrifice which was generally part of it) (Books III and IV), and in the form of an appendix to these the Vajapeya and Rajasuya rites (Book V). The culminating point is the description of the Agnichayana, which occupies Books VI to IX and extends into Book X with the Agnirahasya, "secrets of the fire (altar)". As for the later books, they belong together with the books before VI : first come some special remarks on the rites previously described (Books XI and XII), and then the account of the Ashvamedha (XIII) and of the Pravargya (XIV). The second part of Book XIV constitutes an Upanishad (see § 67). Some domestic rites, such as the Upanayana, are given in the supplementary part.

The work is more elaborate and richer in discussions than the other Brahmanas. The narrations are numerous and often detailed, but always closely connected with the ritual theme. Some passages, especially in Book X, foreshadow the speculations of the Upanishads, and in fact in force of reasoning far surpass them. The Satapatha is the highest achievement of this literature.

THE BRAHMANAS OF THE SAMAVEDA

§ 54. Among these are the Panchavimsha, or Brahmana "of the twenty-five" adhyaya, a concise and technical treatise on the rites involving samans and on the nature of the object of the saman ; it is also called the Tandyamahabrahmana. Another is the Jaiminiya, a voluminous work in three kandas, associated with the Jaiminiya school, which abounds in legends unknown elsewhere, of which some must have a historical foundation. The style is often prolix. The Jaiminiya-Upanishad-Brahmana, which develops the tendency towards a liturgical mysticism, forms a supplement to this work.

Associated with the Samaveda are also a series of minor Brahmanas or Upabrahmanas, whose contents, which vary greatly, have no relation with those of the Brahmanas, except for the first among them :

(1) The Sadvimsha, or "twenty-sixth" chapter of the Panchavimsha, of which it forms in effect an appendix, of somewhat miscellaneous contents, principally of a magical nature. There are two redactions.

(2) The Samavidhana, "rules for the saman", a kind of treatise on magic, preceded by a collection of expiatory practices which anticipate the material of the classical Dharmasastras.

(3) The Arsheya, in two recensions, hardly more than a list of names of samans.

(4) The Devatadhyaya gives the divinities of the samans and other details.

(5) The Samhitopanishad treats of the manner of reciting the verses which are used for the samans.

(6) The Vamsha enumerates the teachers of the Samaveda, extending over 60 generations.

(7) As for the Mantrabrahmana or Cchandogya-Brahmana, the first part of an Upanishadbrahmana of which the Cchandogya-Upanishad (see § 69) is the continuation, it is a collection of mantra of diverse origin for the use of the Samaveda schools, Like the Panchavimsha, all these texts are in principle common to the Kauthuma and the Ranayaniya.

THE GOPATHABRAHMANA AND THE LOST BRAHMANAS

§ 55. The Gopatha, which is associated with the Atharvaveda, perhaps of the Paippalada school, consists of an "anterior Brahmana" of five prapathakas, and a "posterior Brahmana" of six. At least in the second part it is a collection of more or less literal borrowings from the other Brahmanas. Some parts trench upon the domain of the Upanishads.

In addition to these texts, a number of others have existed but are now lost. In some instances fragments have been preserved in manuscript : thus there was a Kathabrahmana, which held the same relation to the Kathaka as the Taittiriyabrahmana has to the Samhita of the same name. The Satyayana, which is often quoted, and of which a large part of the text has recently been found, is almost identical with the Jaiminiya. Quotations from unknown Brahmanas are common in the Vedic, philosophical and legal literature (B. Ghosh). The existence of many other texts can be deduced from particular indications : thus according to Caland the Kaushikasutra presupposes a Brahmana distinct from the Gopotha,

THE DATES

§ 56. No precise dating is possible at present. The tendency is to regard the Brahmanas as defining a "period", which may have been of long duration. If this is so, the period must necessarily have come after that of the Samhitas, and its limits can be fixed by reference to earlier and later texts ; hence we should be inclined to place it in the Xth to VIIth centuries. Not only is the grammar decidedly "modern", but the geographical references and the religious and even social conditions show an evolution beyond the stage of the mantra. However, it has sometimes been argued that the Brahmana portions of the Yajurveda are contemporary with the mantra portions, and even (Caland) that part of the Vajasaneyi was put together after the corresponding part of the Satapatha. In any case all these texts presuppose the existence of the codified Rigveda, from which they borrow hymns in blocks.

§ 57. If account is taken of form, borrowings and quotations, the relative chronology of the Brahmanas can be fixed with some certainty. The Brahmanas of the Black Yajus are usually placed first, the Taittiriya after the Samhita of the same name. Then comes the Aitareya (older parts) and then follows the Kaushitaki. It is possible, however, that the larger Brahmanas of the Samaveda preceded the Aitareya ; the Jaiminiya, according the Caland, coming before the Panchavimsha. The Shatapatha is definitely more recent, and its two recensions are of about the same period, though Caland notes an influence of the Madhyamdina on the Kanva. Last come the Gopatha and the minor texts.

THE FORM

§ 58. There are great differences between the older and the more modern texts : there are even portions in sutra style. Nevertheless broadly it is possible to speak of a form or style of the Brahmanas, which is like nothing else in Indian literature. The thought moves in set forms : (a) the sacrificer does (says) this, because in the world (among the gods) such a procedure is in force, or rather (b) this is why such a procedure is in force ; (c) this element of the sacrifice (in consequence of an irrational identity) *is* such and such a cosmic or psychic element : if one sets it in motion one acts on the corresponding element, or rather appropriates it (Oldenberg). The question is asked what would happen if one performed the act in a way other than that prescribed. The opinion of a theologian is discussed, and is rejected or praised with about equal frequency. The comparisons, though relatively rare, are correspondingly more typical and sometimes striking. There are many narrative digressions, which claim to derive from a myth an interpretation applicable to the practice under discussion, but the narration, which is usually rudimentary, quickly turns back to commentary. There are also paraphrases of verse, and etymological explanations which are dominated by the desire to establish a mystical root, to extract an esoteric form from a common word. There are finally verses of a sententious or epic (gatha) character, and panegyrics (narashamsi).

THE CONTENTS : STORIES

§ 59. The stories (itihasa or akhyana) are of various kinds. A number of legends outlined in the Veda are found here, more fully developed and often "sacerdotalised". Others anticipate the stories of the epics and Puranas. There are many allusions to battles between gods and Asuras. There is a whole folklore of local or personal legends, anecdotes about sages, practices, melodies, more or less distantly reflecting historical realities.

One of the best known of these legendary stories is that of Pururavas and Urvashi (Satapathabrahmana), which is mentioned in the Rigveda. It is the story of one of those goddesses, in this instance the apsaras Urvashi. who marries a mortal—King Pururavas—subject to a certain condition. The condition being violated, through the trickery of the jealous Gandharvas, Urvashi returns to heaven. Pururavas seeks her and finds her. She agrees to see him "on the last night of the year", and finally the Gandharvas accept him as one of themselves.

§ 60. Another celebrated myth is that of Shunahshepa (Aitareyabrahmana). King Harishchandra has no son ; Varuna promises him a son on condition that it is sacrificed immediately after its birth. The king delays fulfiment of the condition until the young prince, Rohita. runs away to the forest. In order to appease the angry god, who has afflicted Harishchandra with dropsy, Rohita wishes to offer himself up, but he is prevented by Indra. Finally he persuades an old Brahman to give him one of his sons, Shunahshepa, to be sacrificed in his place. Shunahshepa is tied to the stake, but is saved at the last moment by the goddess Ushas, to whom he has prayed, and Harishchandra is cured of his sickness.

There is also a series of cosmogonic legends (called more particularly Purana, "old (stories)"), which are almost all attached to the Prajapati cycle. To these might be added the famous legend of the deluge told by the Satapathabrahmana in a form similar to that found later in the epic but here the moral drawn is liturgical rather than theistic.

THE CONTENTS : DOCTRINE

§ 61. The substance of these texts is the exposition of the doctrine of the sacrifice (see § 167), in the form of discontinuous statements, in classified series : numerical combinations, and a web of identifications which begins in the "participation" of the primitives and develops through successive abstractions till it approaches the Upanishadic principle of identity (S. Levi, Oldenberg). We notice the prevalence of magical explanations

—a magical reinterpretation of adoration (Schayer)—and the application of "pre-scientific" techniques, a physiology based on the "vital breath", and the elements of mystical phonetics, grammar and etymology, etc. They are texts of great importance, though for long inadequately appreciated : they are the true sources of Indian thought.

Among many anonymous figures some priests emerge in clear outline, most of all Yajnavalkya, to whom a number of vigorous protestations are attributed.

SPECIMENS

§ 62. The following extracts will suffice to show the literary and mental quality of the Brahmanas :

> The Agnihotra (fire offering) ; in truth it is the ship which transports to the sky ; of that ship which transports to the sky, the Ahavaniya and Garhapatya fires are the two sides, and the pilot, it is he who offers the milk. When he takes himself towards the east, he then conducts his ship towards the east, in the direction of the celestial world; with it he conquers the celestial world. In conducting it towards the north, he makes it rise to the celestial world ; but if anyone stays there, having arrived there from the south, it is like somebody who arrives when the ship has left : he stays behind, he remains outside of it. (Sat. Br. II. 3.3.15)
>
> When one is about to strike (the soma with the pestle), one must think in one's mind of him whom one hates, saying : it is such a one whom I strike, it is not thou. For if one kills a Brahman who is a man, one incurs blame : what then if one strikes him ? For Soma is god, and one kills him when one presses him ; one kills him by means of this (stone). But by this procedure he escapes, he revives, and no sin is incurred. If one hates nobody, one may confine oneself to thinking in one's mind of a blade of grass : thus no sin is incurred. (III. 9.4.17)
>
> (There are two kinds of bricks : the "formularies" which are placed with special formulae, and the "stop-gaps" which are anonymous). In truth the "formularies" are the rulers, and the "stop-gaps" are the people. Now the rulers, that is the eater, and the people, that is the eaten. Where the eaten is more abundant than the eater, that kingdom is prosperous and flourishing. Therefore let the altar be built with abundance of "stop-gaps" ! (VI. 1.2.25).
>
> As around a king who is about to depart there gather lords, magistrates, squires and sheriffs, in the same way around him who knows thus gather all the breaths, when he is about to depart this life. (XIV. 7.1.44).

> Prajapati in truth is the year : during six months he holds up one or the other foot. When he holds up the hot foot, the heat here is above, and the cold below ; it is because of this that in summer one finds the heat above, the cold below : that in summer one draws cold water from the well. And when he holds up the cold foot, the cold here is above, the heat below ; it is because of this that in winter one finds the cold above, the heat below: that in winter one draws warm water from the well. It is thus that Prajapati-year supports the creatures. (Jaim. I. 167).

§ 63. This is the form given by the Brahmana (Sat. Br. I.8.1) to the celebrated legend of the deluge, which appears later in the epic :

> One morning water was brought to Manu for him to wash in, just as today water is brought for the washing of the hands. As he washed, a fish came into his hands. The fish spoke to him : Save me. I shall save thee. From what will you save me ? A deluge will engulf all the creatures : it is from that I shall save thee. How shall I save you ? The fish said : when we are small, there are many dangers of death for us, fish eats fish. You must therefore keep me in a pot, then, when I am bigger, dig a hole and keep me in it, then, when I am very big, take me to the sea : by then I shall have escaped the danger of death. In such and such a year, a deluge will come : prepare a ship and wait for me. And when the flood rises, get into the ship, and I shall save thee. Manu saved the fish, and then took it to the sea. In the year which he had prophesied, Manu built a ship and kept watch ; when the flood rose, he embarked on the ship. The fish came ; he fixed to his horn the rope of the ship and took it thus to the northern mountain. Then he said to him : this is how I have save saved thee ; tie thy ship to a tree, but take care that thou art not cut off by the water while thou art on the mountain. As the water retires, thou shalt descend. As it retired he descended. The northrn mountain is thus called "the descent of Manu". Now the deluge carried off all creatures, and Manu remained alone on earth.

(f) THE ARANYAKAS AND THE UPANISHADS

THE ARANYAKAS

§ 64. The Aranyakas are "texts of the forest", that is secret (rahasya) or at least abstruse works, or perhaps dangerous (because of their magical power), which are therefore kept away from the public and read in isolation in the forest (Oldenberg) ;

they are not, as was long supposed, books for hermits. Most of them are composite works and contain mantra, Brahmana and even elements of sutra. Their dates, which cannot be determined, are in any case later than those of the great Brahmanas : they presuppose a selection from these works.

The schools of the Rigveda possess two aranyakas : the Aitareya, commented on by Sayana, which is in 5 adhyaya, and the Shankhayana or Kaushitaki in 15, corresponding to the Brahmanas of the same names. In the Aitareya occurs the litany accompanying the mahavrata, ritual verses called mahanamni composed in accordance with a grammatical symbolism ; and in the Shankhayana, which is still more given to oddity, there is an exposition of the "interior Agnihotra" as a subsitute for the real rite, as well as magical or mystical formulae. The Aitareya is apparently the more ancient of the two, and the oldest part of the Aitareya is the first three lessons (Keith). A fragment of Shrautasutra (Shankh. XVII and XVIII) is actually nothing but an Aranyaka.

§ 65. Connected with the Yajurveda we have the Taittiriyaranyaka, commented on by Sayana, in 10 prapathakas. It is a mixture of verse (in particular on the horse sacrifice and the human sacrifice, and on the fire altar), and prose (on the pravargya rite, etc.), and is a continuation of the Samhita and the Brahmana of the same name. A part is ascribed by tradition to the Katha school, to which also belong the fragments of another Aranyaka.

For the White Yajus, the final book of the Shatapathabrahmana is an Aranyaka, the name of which also applies to the Upanishad which completes it, the Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad ; it also deals with the pravargya.

Finally for the Samaveda, the Samhita itself contains the Aranyakasamhita and the Aranyagana (see §34). There is also the beginning of the Chhandogyopanishad (see §54) as well as the Jaiminiyopanishadbrahmana (see §54).

THE UPANISHADS : INTRODUCTORY

§ 66. The most ancient Upanishads are closely connected with the Brahmana portions of the Aranyakas. They share with these the esoteric tendency : starting with discussions of the symbolism of melodies or words, they branch off into physiological problems (the theory of breathing), and this leads them on to cosmological ideas. Finally they come to the atman-brahman theme (see §173). As opposed to the other Vedic texts, which relate to the way of action, the karmamarga, they represent the way of knowledge, the jnanamarga.

They are works of scientific rather than religious purport. In the form of free discourses, divided into lessons of the scholastic type, and frequently in dialogue, or in the form of fables, aphorisms and puzzles, they aim at introducing the student to the final aims of the sacred teaching, to establish a kind of metaritualism. They are, in the old sense of the word, the Vedanta, the "end of the Veda". For the most part fairly short, they continue directly certain speculations of the Brahmanas, notably those of Book X of the Shatapathabrahmana on the "secrets of the fire-altar", where the expository dialogue has already achieved a finished form. But the "magical" aspect is also preserved : the Upanishad might be defined as dialectic on a magical basis. In contrast to the earlier literature, we note the important part played by persons, the prominence given to certain eminent teachers.

THE TEXTS : THE BRIHADARANYAKA-UPANISHAD

§ 67. The earliest Upanishads are in prose, with some sententious verses and occasional lyrical passages. Their language, close to that of the Brahmanas, their pure doctrinal position, and their connections with the Veda, all point to their antiquity. It is agreed that the oldest of them are two, the longest and most important, the Brihadaranyaka, "(Upanishad) of the Great Aranyaka", in 6 adhyaya, which ends Book XIV of the Shatapathabrahmana and is undoubtedly the most ancient Upanishad ; and next to it the Chhandogya, "(Upanishad on the) doctrine of the chhandoga (singers of the Veda)", in 8 prapathaka, which is part of the Samaveda (see §54). Both are collections of material imperfectly coordinated, and in form and content they are somewhat alike.

§ 68. Like the Shatapatha, the Brihadaranyaka exists in two recensions, which differ but slightly. To a collection of ritual and then philosophical speculations (1,2) it adds Yajnavalkya's dialectical "tournament" : this famous theologian established his superiority over all his rivals by a series of discourses enshrined in dialogue form and almost dramatic in presentation. Beginning from section 2, these discourses fill 3 and 4 ; this is the exposition of idealistic monism in its original form. The work is completed by a "supplementary section" (5,6), a collection of quotations from theologians (proverbs, allegories, enigmas, litanies), and finally by a list or "line" (vamsha) of teachers, which takes us through two branches back to a remote past.

THE CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

§ 69. The Chhandogya has a long introduction on saman mysticism (1,2), and then begins speculations on atman-brahman (3) which the following chapters take up and develop, always in dialogue form, and interspersed with didactic fables (such as the samvargavidya, "science of absorption") and with

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ritual and eschatological discourses (5). Finally come some "acts" of faith for the Brahman novice. The persons of the dialogues are Uddalaka Aruni and his son Shvetaketu. These two Upanishads have many passages in common : the theory of sleep, that of the five fires and of the two ways, the dispute about precedence among the sense-organs, the elixir of power, etc.

OTHER PROSE UPANISHADS

§ 70 (a) The Aitareya Upanishad is equally old. It is preserved as part of the Aranyaka of the same name ; it sets forth the creation of the world by the atman, the triple birth of the atman, and its pantheistic essence.

(b) The Kaushitaki is also old. It forms part of the corsesponding Aranyaka. It treats of reincarnation and other original eschatological doctrines (the paryankavidya), and then the theory of breath and of the atman. It is possible that this forms a slightly later group with the two following :

(c) The Kena (thus named from its first word), which is partly in verse form, forst sets forth the inscrutable character of the brahman, and then in a fine allegory shows that the gods themseles do not know the brahman. The text occurs as part of the Jaiminiya-Upanishadbrhamana (see § 54).

(d) The Taittiriya forms sections 7 to 9 of the corresponding Aranyaka. It is divided into the "Vine of Instruction", precepts and prayers for the use of the student, the "Vine of Felicity in Brahman", symbolical of the brahman and the attainment of the brahman by the path of felicity, and the "Vine of Bhrigu", a series of identifications of various entities, notably "nourisment", with the brahman.

(e) To this group is often added the short Isha or Ishavasya (thus named from its first word), although it is in verse. It is the final section of the Samhita of the White Yajus. In its principal part this brief work, which forms an aggregate of four strata (Poucha), teaches the inefficacy of works : all that matters is to know the atman, which is one with all essences and overcomes all differences.

THE METRICAL UPANISHADS

§ 71. The Upanishads which are entirely or almost entirely in verse form a second group, the connections of which with the Veda are less close. The doctrine of the atman is here intermingled with new ideas, popular versions of the Samkhya, and allusions to Yoga practices. Moreover, a vague representation of a personal god is to be noticed. From the standpoint of language and prosody these short texts, which like the verse parts of the preceding group of Upanishads have been imperfectly transmitted and subjected to alteration, are no longer to be classed as Vedic.

tic type, and frequently in dialogue, or in the form of fables, aphorisms and puzzles, they aim at introducing the student to the final aims of the sacred teaching, to establish a kind of metaritualism. They are, in the old sense of the word, the Vedanta, the "end of the Veda". For the most part fairly short, they continue directly certain speculations of the Brahmanas, notably those of Book X of the Shatapathabrahmana on the "secrets of the fire-altar", where the expository dialogue has already achieved a finished form. But the "magical" aspect is also preserved : the Upanishad might be defined as dialectic on a magical basis. In contrast to the earlier literature, we note the important part played by persons, the prominence given to certain eminent teachers.

THE TEXTS : THE BRIHADARANYAKA-UPANISHAD

§ 67. The earliest Upanishads are in prose, with some sententious verses and occasional lyrical passages. Their language, close to that of the Brahmanas, their pure doctrinal position, and their connections with the Veda, all point to their antiquity. It is agreed that the oldest of them are two, the longest and most important, the Brihadaranyaka, "(Upanishad) of the Great Aranyaka", in 6 adhyaya, which ends Book XIV of the Shatapathabrahmana and is undoubtedly the most ancient Upanishad ; and next to it the Chhandogya, "(Upanishad on the) doctrine of the chhandoga (singers of the Veda)", in 8 prapathaka, which is part of the Samaveda (see §54). Both are collections of material imperfectly coordinated, and in form and content they are somewhat alike.

§ 68. Like the Shatapatha, the Brihadaranyaka exists in two recensions, which differ but slightly. To a collection of ritual and then philosophical speculations (1,2) it adds Yajnavalkya's dialectical "tournament" : this famous theologian established his superiority over all his rivals by a series of discourses enshrined in dialogue form and almost dramatic in presentation. Beginning from section 2, these discourses fill 3 and 4 ; this is the exposition of idealistic monism in its original form. The work is completed by a "supplementary section" (5,6), a collection of quotations from theologians (proverbs, allegories, enigmas, litanies), and finally by a list or "line" (vamsha) of teachers, which takes us through two branches back to a remote past.

THE CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

§ 69. The Chhandogya has a long introduction on saman mysticism (1,2), and then begins speculations on atman-brahman (3) which the following chapters take up and develop, always in dialogue form, and interspersed with didactic fables (such as the samvargavidya, "science of absorption") and with

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ritual and eschatological discourses (5). Finally come some "acts" of faith for the Brahman novice. The persons of the dialogues are Uddalaka Aruni and his son Shvetaketu. These two Upanishads have many passages in common : the theory of sleep, that of the five fires and of the two ways, the dispute about precedence among the sense-organs, the elixir of power, etc.

OTHER PROSE UPANISHADS

§ 70 (a) The Aitareya Upanishad is equally old. It is preserved as part of the Aranyaka of the same name ; it sets forth the creation of the world by the atman, the triple birth of the atman, and its pantheistic essence.

(b) The Kaushitaki is also old. It forms part of the corsesponding Aranyaka. It treats of reincarnation and other original eschatological doctrines (the paryankavidya), and then the theory of breath and of the atman. It is possible that this forms a slightly later group with the two following :

(c) The Kena (thus named from its first word), which is partly in verse form, forst sets forth the inscrutable character of the brahman, and then in a fine allegory shows that the gods themseles do not know the brahman. The text occurs as part of the Jaiminiya-Upanishadbrhamana (see § 54).

(d) The Taittiriya forms sections 7 to 9 of the corresponding Aranyaka. It is divided into the "Vine of Instruction", precepts and prayers for the use of the student, the "Vine of Felicity in Brahman", symbolical of the brahman and the attainment of the brahman by the path of felicity, and the "Vine of Bhrigu", a series of identifications of various entities, notably "nourisment", with the brahman.

(e) To this group is often added the short Isha or Ishavasya (thus named from its first word), although it is in verse. It is the final section of the Samhita of the White Yajus. In its principal part this brief work, which forms an aggregate of four strata (Poucha), teaches the inefficacy of works : all that matters is to know the atman, which is one with all essences and overcomes all differences.

THE METRICAL UPANISHADS

§ 71. The Upanishads which are entirely or almost entirely in verse form a second group, the connections of which with the Veda are less close. The doctrine of the atman is here intermingled with new ideas, popular versions of the Samkhya, and allusions to Yoga practices. Moreover, a vague representation of a personal god is to be noticed. From the standpoint of language and prosody these short texts, which like the verse parts of the preceding group of Upanishads have been imperfectly transmitted and subjected to alteration, are no longer to be classed as Vedic.

(a) The name or the Katha or Kathaka-Upanishad refers to one of the schools of the Black Yajurveda. The identity of atman-brahman, and a series of attempts to state the nature of these entities, approaching the question from the starting-point of the destiny of the person after death, are presented as the teaching of Yama, the god of death, granted to the young and pious Brahman Nachiketas. Sent to the other world by his father, Nachiketas obtains a boon from the god, and asks to be told whether man survives death or not. The answer is evasive : it is a rite which will give the key to the secret. This story, which derives form a legend in the Taittiriya-Brahmana, seems to refer to an inititation into the mysteries, and may be ultimately the result of a borrowing from outside India. Without drawing any conclusions as to dates, we can only point to the similarity with the Platonic myth of Er, son of Armenios.

§ 72. (b) The Shvetashvatara (or Mantra) Upanishad, which also belongs to the Black Yajus (Taittiriya branch, bearing the name "(the man with white mules") is a composite and eclectic work. In addition to a triple brahman, it postulates a personal god, who moves the "wheel of the brahman" and shows the characteristics of Rudra-Shiva : it is a sort of Shaiva Bhagavadgita, says Barth. According to Hauer the monotheistic tendency is the essence of the work, to which the Samkhya-Yoga ideas have attached themselves.

(c) The Mahanarayana, a late addition to the Taittiriya-Aranyaka, "(Upanishad) of the Great Narayana", a divinised form of the cosmic atman, is a composite of hymns, verses taken from various Vedic texts, and didactic prose formulae on ritual or on the religious virtues.

(d) The Mundaka, "(Upanishad of the) shaven (ascetics)", which is attached to the Atharvaveda, extols the "high knowledge" of the brahman, from which the world emanates, and which the author partially distinguishes from the individual atman.

§ 73. (e) The Prashna, "(Upanishad of) questions", a text half in verse and half in prose, which also claims relationship with the Atharvaveda, gives the replies of the sage Pippalada to his six pupils : whence comes life, how many deities uphold the creature, from where the vital breath derives, what is the nature of dreams, the meaning of the sacred syllable *om*, and what are the sixteen parts which constitute man.

(f) The Mandukya is usually given a later date. It is a small work, connected with the Atharvaveda, which describes the brahman under the symbol of the syllable *om*.

(g) The Maitri or Maitrayaniya, like the Mandukya, is in prose. It emanates from the Vedic school of the same name, and seems to be equally recent. Buddhist influences have been discerned, perhaps wrongly, in it. It is a series of lessons by the sage Shakayanya to the prince Brihadratha on the origin of life and of consciousness. He distinguishes the collective atman or purusha from the individual atman, which follows the laws of karman and is entangled in matter. He sets forth the means by which an individual can be united with the purusha.

§ 74. These are the 14 properly Vedic Upanishads. Belvalkar adds to this list the Vashkalamantra (which Schrader describes as the "precursor of all the known upanishadic literature"), a sort of hymn to Indra inspired by the Rigveda, one school of which gives its name to this short text ; the Chagaleya, which illustrates the relations of the soul and the body by the parable of the chariot ; the Arsheya, in which four theologians, challenging each other, propose their different definitions of the brahman ; and finally the Shaunaka, an allegory concerned with ritual.

FORM

§ 75. The prose, at least that of the early texts, is that of the Brahmanas, with fewer archaisms, more plastic, more "modern" and attractive. Conducted with a certain art, in an earnest and vigorous manner, the dialogue works towards a conclusion, which may however be an evasion of the issue. Comparison is the very essence of the thought. On the other hand, the story tends to disappear. The repetitive style, didactic and magical at the same time, is revived in all its vigour, but the reasoning is still halting, giving way to digressions full of puns and fragments of prayers. As for the verse parts, except in a few favourable cases it is a verse made up of quotations, of the type as was used later in the Buddhist poems and the Brahmanical smritis.

DATES, ETC.

§ 76. The Upanishads are later than the Brahmanas : the problem is to determine their position in relation to early Buddhism, which shows so many points of contact with them. The problem has often been discussed. Today we no longer believe so confidently in the priority of the Upanishads, or in other words, we do not see so clearly that the doctrine of the Buddha was contained in germ in the Upanishads. We consider possible a parallel development, such as Indian doctrines have undergone at other times. No Sutta makes any allusion to any Upanishad, and on the other hand there is no proof that any "Vedic" Upanishad is post-Buddhist, as has often been asserted. Ancient Buddhism and the Upanishads derive from a common source of ideas, which is not wholly Aryan. All that can be said is that the thought of the

Upanishads is more archaic and less evolved and that the line of development was shorter in one case than in the other (Oldenberg). Taking all things into consideration, the date, often suggested, of 500 B.C. is reasonable.

§ 77. The "secularity" which marks the Upanishads in contrast to the other Vedic texts is not only an effect of time: they are addressed to a social stratum different from that implied in the Brahmanas, a less theocratic society. If these texts show signs of criticism directed against the Brahmans and constitute some sort of rupture with Vedism, it is not the less true that they bathe in the same ambience as the Vedic literature, and they are in many respects near to the Atharvaveda.

About their real authors we know nothing : from the names mentioned, and the genealogies, we can draw no exact conclusions.

§ 78. The word Upanishad itself, despite its clear etymology (prefix upa+ni and root sad, to sit), does not bear the obvious meanings : "homage" (Oldenberg), or "confidential (ni) teaching given to near (upa) disciples" ; Schayer suggests "(propitiatory) encirclement." The real sense must be "(esoteric) equivalence", cf. the root upas-, "to approach", mystically and semantically, to "place in equivalence." Only the literal interpretation is easy. We cannot accept uncritically the Indian commentaries, written so many centuries later—Gaudapada (VIIIth century ?), Madhva XIII, Shankaranda XIV, Rangaramanuja XVI, Bhaskararaya XVIII, Aurobindo Ghosh XX—with Sankara at their head, which, admittedly with great intellectual power, force all these texts into the narrow framework of absolutist monism. Ramanuja's interpretations are less tendentious. However that may be, both in India and in Europe (since Anpuetil Duperron's discovery of the Upanishads and their publication from 1801 onward, with a Latin translation, based on a Persian version) these works have constituted a far from negligible part of the spiritual property of mankind.

SPECIMENS

§ 79. Here is a pessage from the Brihadaranyaka (II.4) : Yajnavalkya, about to leave his home to embrace the ascetic life, explains to his wife Maitreyi the basis of his doctrine :

> Maitreyi, said Yajnavakya, I am about to leave. I must divide my property between you and Katyayani. Maitreyi replied : If all this earth, Lord, were mine, and full of riches, should I thereby become immortal ? No, said Yajnavalkya. As is the life of rich men, so your life would be. There is no hope of immortality in riches. Maitreyi then said : What should I do, then, with that which will not make me immortal ? Condescend, Lord,

tell me what you know. Yajnavalkya said : You are dear to me, and now you say to me also what is dear. Come, sit down, I will explain to you. Pay attention to my explanation.

And he said : In truth, it is not for the love of the husband that the husband is dear, it is for the love of the self that the husband is dear. It is not for the love of the wife that the wife is dear, it is for the love of the self that the wife is dear. It is not for the love of the sons that the sons are dear, it is for the love of the self that the sons are dear. It is not for the love of riches that riches are dear, it is for the love of the self that riches are dear. It is not for the love of religion that religion is dear, it is for the love of the self that religion is dear. It is not for the love of power that power is dear, it is for the love of the self that power is dear. It is not for the love of the worlds that the worlds are dear, it is for the love of the self that the worlds are dear. It is not for the love of the gods that the gods are dear, it is for the love of the self that the gods are dear. It is not for the love of creatures that creatures are dear, it is for the love of the self that creatures are dear. It is not for the love of such or such thing that such or such thing is dear, it is for the love of the self that such or such thing is dear. It is the self which must be seen, heard, thought upon, meditated upon. O Maitreyi, it is by seeing the self, hearing it, thinking it, recognising it that all which is, is comprehended.

Religion disowns him who considers religion something outside the self. Power leaves him who considers power something outside the self. The worlds abandon him who considers the worlds something outside the self. The gods disown him who considers the gods something outside the self The creatures abandon him who considers the creatures something outside the self. Everything abandons him who considers anything whatever outside the self. Religion, power, the worlds, the gods, the creatures, all that exists : that is the self.

As one cannot seize the sounds from a drum that is beaten, but if the drum or the drummer is seized the sound is seized ; as one cannot seize the sounds from a conch which is blown, but if the conch or the blower is seized the sound is seized ; as one cannot seize the sounds from a lute that is played, but if the lute or the player is seized the sound is seized ; as from a fire which one has made of damp wood comes smoke of different kinds, so the outbreathing of the great Being is the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda, the Atharvangiras, the narratives, the ancient stories, the sciences, the Upanishads, the verses, the aphorisms, the explanatians, the commentaries : all these are the out-breathing of the great Being.

As a piece of salt thrown into water dissolves and can no more be touched, but wherever one takes from that water, salt is found there ; in the same way is the great Being infinite, unlimited, and wholly constituted of knowledge. Rising with these elements, he is reabsorbed into them, for there is no consciousness, I say, after death. Thus said Yajnavalkya.

Maitreyi said : My Lord has bewildered me by saying that there is no consciousness after death. He replied : I do not speak in order to bewilder ; I speak in order that you may know.

§ 80. From an Upanishad of the versified type : Yama puts to the test the young Nachiketas, who has asked of him a boon (Katha Upanishad, I) :

Ask for sons and grandsons who will live a hundred years, herds of cattle, elephants, gold and horses, a great extent of land ! Ask that you may live as many autumns as you desire !

Yes, if you think that this is an equivalent gift, ask for riches and long life ! Become one of the great ones of this earth, Nachiketas ! I shall enable you to partake of all that you wish for.

All those things which in this mortal world are difficult to attain to, ask for them at your pleasure : these charming women, with their carriages and their harps, the like of which men do not possess, I shall give them to you, and you may make love to them ! But O Nachiketas, ask me no more about death !

Nachiketas replies :

Among men, O Death, tomorrow gradually dulls all the senses. Even a whole life is very short ; keep for yourself your carriages, for yourself your dances and songs.

Man is satiated by riches ; shall we have wealth when we have seen you ? We live only as long as you command. This is the sole favour that I have to ask of you.

Since the wise man, in his low and evil situation, growing old and dying, meets those who neither grow old nor die ; who, then, thinking of colours, of pleasures and of joys, would find charm in a life which was too long ?

Upon that which stands in doubt, O Death, I wish to know ; on the subject of the great Journey inform me ! The favour which will allow me to penetrate this mystery it is this and none other which Nachiketas chooses.

(g) THE KALPASUTRAS

INTRODUCTORY

§ 81. With the Sutras ro aphorisms (the true sense is "(guiding) thread", whence "rule"—less probably a thread to which written sheets were attached), we emerge from the Veda in the strict sense and enter the Vedanga (see § 92), of which tradition recognises six branches : phonetics, ritual, grammar, etymology, metrics and astronomy. The common characteristic of all the works is their style. They are texts for the schools, corresponding to similar needs, *ancillae theologiae*. Nevertheless some Vedanga have abandoned the sutra style and are presented in verse or even in the form of commentary.

The Kalpasutra or "aphorisms on ritual" (kalpa properly means "form"), which describe the cult ceremonies, are the basic documents of the religion.

TYPES OF TEXTS

§ 82 They are divided into (a) the Shrautasutras or "Sutras (of the cult deriving from the) Shruti", that is those of the public cult which is at the root of the hymns and the Brahmanas (they are also called the Vaitanikasutras) ; and (b) the Smartasutras or "Sutras (of the cult deriving from the) Smriti", that is those of the human tradition ; they are later than the former and presuppose them. They are divided into the Grihyasutras or "Sutras of the domestic (cult)", that is of the cult practised at the domestic hearth, and the Dharmasutras or "Sutras (relating to) the law."

Sometimes the Shrautasutras include paribhashasutras, which give general rules (paribhasha) which assist interpretation ; pravarasutras, which enumerate the ancestral Rishis ; pitrimedhas, which together with the shraddhakalpas or "ritual of the funeral feast" treat of the sacrifice to the ancestral spirits ; dvaidha and karmanta (in Baudhayana), the former expounding controversies and the latter technical details. Somewhat separate are the Shulvasutra or "Sutras of the cord", most often attached to the Shrautasutras, which describe the way of measuring the places of sacrifice and the hearths, and constitute the most ancient documents of Indian geography.

§ 83. All these works relate in the strictest manner to a school : they may be said to be the reason for its existence. But only some of the schools have preserved Sutras of all the different types. The relation to the school is shown by the way in which mantras are quoted : a Sutra cites mantras in the same text as they bear in the Samhita to which it belongs, and cites them by their initial word (pratika) : it is a simple reference. On the other hand mantras from another Samhita are cited *in extenso* and often altered. Nevertheless this distinction is not absolute. The Shrautasutras also belong to a specified Brahmana, but not without some fluidity. All contain prose or verse formulae (magical formulae in the Grihyasutras) which are unknown to the Samhitas.

As to the content of these works, it is entirely concerned with ritual, except for those (Vadhula, etc.) which include portions of Brahmana. Details are given in a subsequent paragraph. Sometimes the description is interrupted by general remarks or prescriptions applicable to the ritual under discussion, in the manner of a brief gloss.

DATES

§ 84. Although some of these texts resemble each other in the same way as do different manuscripts of the same original, we cannot reconstruct an original Sutra, even among those belonging to the same Veda. No authors are mentioned, except the heads of schools who gave their names to the collections and cannot be regarded as the real authors. It is not even certain that the Shrautasutras and Grihyasutras of the same collection come from the same hand. Some of the Sutras have been badly preserved, and it is suspected that some contain additions. Almost all are provided with post-Vedic commentaries of various dates.

In favourable cases their relative chronology can be inferred from internal indications, borrowings, citations, etc., and from linguistic considerations. In general, even if it is granted with Knauer that the domestic ritual is earlier than the public ritual, it remains true that so far as the texts are concerned the Grihyasutras are later than the Shrautasutras. The Grihyasutra tradition shows the influence of the Rigveda ; it also bears traces of the Atharvan atmosphere. On the other hand, it does not always comply with the strict demands of the schools. The texts are more recent, and are related one to another in a clearer way than those of the Shrautasutras (Oldenberg).

§ 85. As to definite dates, attempts to assign them fail before the same obstacles as surround all the Vedic literature. There is less inclination now than formerly to think of a Sutra "epoch" distinct from that of the Brahmanas. At least in some traditions, Sutras must have been composed side by side with Brahmanas, and according to Caland Baudhayana must have preceded the Shatapathabrahmana. Generally, however, a Shrautasutra is later than the Brahmana from which it derives. These works must have been composed between 400 and 200 B C. ; it is only in an exceptional case that a date so late as the VIth century A.D. is assigned to the (revised ?) manuals of a Vedic school, that of the Vaikhanasa (Caland).

LIST OF THE SUTRAS

§ 86. Connected with the Rigveda we have a Shrautasutra and a Grihyasutra for the schools of Ashvalayana and Shankhayana (where the Grihyasutra appears in two recensions, one called Shambavya). The relations of these texts among themselves and to other texts remain obscure. The Shankhayana texts are manifestly composite.

For the Black Yajurveda there are many texts, in particular in the Taittiriya school, which possesses no fewer than six series of Sutras :

(a) the branch of the Baudhayana, often declared to be the most ancient of the six, and indeed of all this literature. The style of the Baudhayana Shrautasutra is close to that of the Brahmanas, and tradition describes this text as a pravachana, "(oral) exposition". All the various types of Sutra are represented in this school.

(b) That of the Vadhula, similar to the preceding in style and, in part, in content, and perhaps even more ancient than the Baudhayana (Caland). Only parts of the Shrautasutra (in which are incorporated sections of Brahmana), of the Grihyasutra and the Shulvasutra have been preserved.

(c) Bharadvaja, with an incomplete Shrautasutra, a Grihyasutra and a Pitrimedha.

(d) Apastamba, containing all the types of sutra, and forming one of the complete and most minutely detailed manuals of this class of literature.

(e) Hiranyakeshin or Satyashadha, similar to the last-mentioned.

(f) Vaikhanasa, comprising Shrautasutra, Grihyasutra and Dharamasutra only.

The last four form a group and represent the recent tradition ; in particular Hiranyakeshin is often similar to (and later than) Apastamba which seems to have been influenced in part by Varaha and Manava (see below), and on the other hand to have received something from the White Yajus (Caland). Vaikhanasa, which is quite recent (see § 85), contains new material, at least in the Grihyasutra, which must be earlier than the Shrautasutra (Caland).

§ 87. For the other schools of the Yajus, there exist fragments of the Shrautasutra of the Katha, and the Grihyasutra and the Shulvasutra complete ; these are sometimes known by the name Laugakshi. For the Maitrayaniya, there exist the Shrautasutra and the Grihyasutra (also the Shulvasutra) of the Manava, which seem to be early. There is also a series of corresponding texts of the Varaha, very similar to the preceding ; these do not seem to presuppose a distinet Samhita. For the White Yajus, on the one hand the Shrautasutra of Katyayana, a recent text, together with a Pitrimedha and a Shulvasutra, is known to exist ; and on the other the Paraskara Grihyasutra, also called the Katiya ; both in general follow the Madhyamdina recension.

§ 88. In the Samaveda, the Shrautasutra of Latyayana and the Grihyasutra of Gobhila (with the corresponding Shraddhakalpa) belong to the Kauthuma, as do some other manuals which have a bearing only on this Veda (lists of saman, and arrangements of the saman in stoma "modes"), in particular the Arsheyakalpa or Mashakakalpa, with its supplement the Kshudrasutra, both deriving from an ancient tradition (Caland). The Shrautasutra of Drahyayana, a text very much like the Latyayana and perhaps more recent, must belong to the Ranayaniya branch.

The Grihyasutra of Khadira, which is based on the Gobhila, the Pitrimedha (with the Shraddhakalpa) of Gautama, and the Dharmasutra of the same name are of uncertain derivation (a special school of the Gautama ?). Uncertain likewise is the Nidanasutra, "Sutra of connections", a work attributed to Patanjali, which treats of technical details of metres, the saman and their grouping, and the Samaveda rituals ; it also contains material on grammar. Finally, a Shrautasutra (fragmentary) and a Grihyasutra bear the name of the Jaiminiya school.

§ 89. For the Atharvaveda the texts do not correspond to those of the other Vedas. The Vaitana, "(Sutra of the cult of the) three fires", is not an ordinary Shrautasutra : it confines itself to extracting from the common ritual the acts incumbent upon the Brahman and his assistants during the public sacrifice (Caland). The work is later than the Kaushika and depends on it (Bloomfield). This latter work is also not a normal Grihyasutra : in addition to the domestic portions, it gives the outline of a shrauta (a summary description of the sacrifice performed at the syzygies, planetary conjunctions or oppositions), in which are included the magical practices the exposition of which forms the main interest of the work (Caland). At the end is a list of omens and portents, to which is finally added a section of addenda.

It is remarkable that several schools compiled prayers for the use of their Grihyasutras, having the same relation to these as the Samhitas bear to the Shrautasutras ; thus Apastamba school possesses a Mantrapatha, "Recitation of prayers", which seems to have existed before the Grihyasutra (Oldenberg) and contains some very archaic portions (Winternitz). A similar relation exists between the Mantrabrahmana (see § 54) and the Grihyasutra of Gobhila, and between the Grihyasutra of Vaikhanasa and a Mantrasamhita belonging to that school but more recent than the Grihyasutra (Caland).

OTHER RITUAL TEXTS

§ 90. The ritual literature does not come to an end here. First, a number of the works mentioned carry parishishta, "addenda", normally in sloka form, which repeat many details about the domestic cult ; such is the Grihyasamgraha, which explains the technical terms used by Gobhila and gives explanations valid for all the grihya literatuae. Similar is the Karmapradipa, "elucidation of works" which is also connected with Gobhila. There are some parishishta to Shrautasutras, such as the Varaha (while the two corresponding parts of the Manava are incorporated in the Shrautasutra), and the Vaitana (treating of expiatory rites). But the most important are those of the Atharvaveda, a valuable collection of information on rites, expiations, schools, sacrificial instruments, and phonetics (with a series of classified words). The Atharvavedaparishishta form in addition a treatise on divination, which describes the forewarnings drawn from natural phenomena and the means of averting the evil prophesied ; the Adbhutasagara is a commentary on this part of the work (Kohlbrugge). Finally there is the literature of vidhana, "rules", "the object of which is to teach a sort of cult of contracts" (Barth) : thus the Samavidhana, which has taken rank as a Brahmana (see §54), and the Rigvidhana, ascribed to Shaunaka, which lays down in regard to each hymn or verse of the Rigveda, the results of a magical type obtained by reciting it.

§ 91. Many other treatises cannot be regarded as belonging to Vedism owing to the date at which they were put together ; these are the prayoga, "usages", paddhati, "guides", karika, "mnemonic verses", which either set forth the ritual of a school from a practical point of view, or more often describe a particular rite, marriage, funeral or sacrifice to the ancestors. This literature, which has continued to be produced down to the modern period, is little known, and the published portion is only a small part of it.

(h) SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

PHONETICS : THE PRATISHAKHYA

§ 92. At an early period, the sacred character of the Samhitas, together with the requirements of oral transmission, led to the establishment of a system of a phonetics (shiksha, properly "instruction"), which forms the first of the Vedanga (see §1). It is already implied in the samhitapatha, "continuous recitation", to which is contrasted the padapatha (see §5), and other more complex methods of recitation such as the kramapatha, "recitation by progression (member to member)" with its eight varieties. Moreover certain religious texts, especially those of the Rigveda schools, show acquaintance with the problems of phonetics.

At a later period there were compiled, "school by school" (whence their name), the Pratishakhya, practical manuals the aim of which is to teach how, starting from the padapatha, the samhitapatha (and secondarily the kramapatha) can be formed. They contain definitions of technical terms, and rules in regard to quantity and vocal lengthening, tone, syllabication, doubling, and above all euphony (samdhi) ; they are treatises on euphony, in the broad sense, though they also deal with grammar proper, and metrics. They claim to set forth the facts with which they deal exhaustively.

These texts are of great interest for the linguist : they are unparallelled documents on the pronunciation of Sanskrit at an early period. They also provide some help in the interpretation of the texts, if only by confirming certain readings. But their composition is not very concise, despite the obscurity of some of their formulae. The needs of practical instruction have prevailed over rationality of treatment.

§ 93. The most important is the Pratishakhya of the Rigveda, attributed rightly or wrongly to Shaunaka, the author of Chapter 5 of the Aitareyaaranyaka. It is a composite work, which in its verse form has undoubtedly taken the place of a prose original. The part devoted to metrics and the teaching in general are highly developed. The Taittiriya school possess a Pratishakhya, which is the most technical and the purest in form. The White Yajus (Madhyamdina recension) also has one, attributed to Katyayana. The Atharvaveda, strangely enough, has two, of which the mutual relations have not been clarifed ; the more important is known under the name Shaunakiya Chatuyadhyayika. Finally the Samaveda, or more exactly the Kauthuma school, in addition to a Pratishakhya of substantially the regular type, the Riktantra of Shakatayana, possesses several treatises of a special character : the Pushpasutra or Phullasutra, in two recensions, of undetermined authorship, which gives the names of the saman in connection with the uttaragana (see § 35), and then deals with the sound changes which the verses undergo in serving as the base of the melodies ; the Samatantra is a supplement to this work ; and the Panchavidhasutra deals with the three principal divisions of the saman : prelude, response and conclusion (coda).

§ 94. Several of these texts, while belonging to a specified school, take notice of the readings of other schools, and the commentaries increase their number (all these texts have been the subject of important modern commentaries, in the absence of which they would have remained largely unknown ; such is the commentary of Uvata for the Rik). Their relative chronology is uncertain ; it would be expected that those of the Rik or of the Black Yajus would be the oldest, followed by those of the White Yajus or the Samaveda (according to Suryakanta the Riktantra was composed in several strata). Their relation to Panini's grammar has been the subject of controversy : it has been claimed that indications in the terminology of the Pratishakhyas, and the relations between some of their sutras and those of Panini, show their priority (Liebich). Thieme has put forward new arguments to support the view that Panini is earlier and denies that the Katyayana of the Vajasaneyipratishakhya is identical with the author of the Varttika on the grammar of Panini. The existence of other Pratishakhyas is to be presumed.

THE SHIKSHA

§ 95. The Shiksha or "instructions", brief treatises on phonetics, are more modern, at least in their present form. Although almost all of them belong to a specified Veda and bear the name of a Vedic teacher, they have only distant connections with the schools. In relation to the Pratishakhyas, these verse texts represent a stage of popularisation, which however does not rule out certain pedantic refinements. The Vyasashiksha, the most systematic of these works, is the only one to follow a Pratishakhya closely : namely that of the Taittiriya (Luders). One of these Shiksha is attributed to Panini (an attribution which M. Ghosh considers correct) and occurs in five recensions. Most of them are now in a defective state. Some deal only with subsidiary questions, such as accent and music (Narada), etc. Despite the conclusions of S. Varma, there appear to be hardly any local particularities.

THE ANUKRAMANI

§ 96. Although they form no part of the Vedanga, the Anukramani, "index", are inseparable from the auxiliary texts of the Vedas. The only ones which are directly known (similar works must have existed for all the Vedas) are those of the Rik. These brief verse texts give lists of the authors of the hymns, the metres, the divinities presiding over the hymns, and the sections of the Veda. They are ascribed to Shaunaka, except the Sarvanukramani, "general index", a more systematic work in prose, and probably more recent, which is by Katyyana. Anukramani have been compiled in later times, as by Madhava (Xth century ?), who wrote two in mnemonic verse. Shaunaka is also credited with an important work which is similar in character to an index : the Brihaddevata, "great divinity", in two recensions, which together with a catalogue of divinities gives legends or myths, often of value, and even contains a chapter on grammar. This work, which is in verse, and of recent form, has borrowed largely form the Nirukta (see § 97).

ETYMOLOGY : THE NIRUKTA

§ 97. The Vedanga of etymology (nirukta, properly "verbal explanation") is represented by only one work, which however is of very great interest, the Nirukta of Yaska. It is a commentary revised by Yaska from an earlier work, the Nighantu or Naighantuka, which consists of lists of the Rigveda (rarely from any other source), of which we have two recensions, and a third preserved in the Atharvaparishishta. The words are first arranged in large semantic groups, then comes a list of isolated words (aikapadika), taken from the recent parts of the Samhita (Belvalkar), and finally the divinities are enumerated in several series. The work of Yaska (two recensions, in 12 adhyaya followed by two apocryphal adhyaya) is a series of etymological analyses of the words given in the Nighantu, analyses accompanied by a sort of running gloss on the verses in which the words occur. Yaska begins with an important discussion of general grammar : he defines "becoming", marked by the verb, with its modalities, enumerates the four parts of discourse and their functions, discusses whether nouns all derive from a verbal root—that is Yaska's opinion, while Gargya upholds a more qualified view—and finally discusses whether mantras have a meaning, that is to say, whether their magical significance is or is not the only meaning of the sacred formulae.

§ 98. Many of its etymologies have no value for us. Despite its claims to learning the Nirukta summarises the discussion of the language from the symbolical and mystical points of view, in which what was important was to create verbal associations. But it does bear witness to a methodical effort to analyse words, and to lay down the rules governing the change, decay and transposition of sounds. It recognises the four parts of discourse. From the point of view of interpreting the hymns, it is the most ancient commentary, indeed the only one which goes back to Vedic times.

Yaska comes at the end of a line of masters, of whom he mentions 17. The data of his work remains undetermined. It has been commented on by Durga and Skandasvamin (-Maheshvara) in particular. Its archaic style with sutra forms surviving in the midst of continuous prose, the Vedic atmosphere, the accustomed use of certain technical terms, have inclined the majority of authors to place Yaska before Panini, that is approximately in the Vth century B.C. Thieme, however, believes in the priority of the grammarian.

METRICS

§ 99. Of the Vedanga on metrics (chhandas) and on astronomy (jyotisha) we possess only texts of rather late date, which however must reflect ancient teachings. The Sutras of Pingala on metrics, the Chhandasutra, existing in two slightly different recensions, the one attached to the Rik and the other to the Yajurveda, are recent although they treat only of classical metres. M. Ghosh dates the work as far back as the fifth century B.C., and the author is sometimes identified with Patanjali. The Vedic portion of it lays down the rules of prosody, expounds the "meters of the gods", the "metres of the Asuras", etc., which are claimed to be valid for the prose of the Veda also, and finally treats of the seven normal metres and some complex or aberrant forms. The Nidanasutra (see § 88), the Rikpratishakhya (see § 93) and other works also treat of metrics. Reflections on the names and forms of metres, and the mysticism of the syllable and of the verse, were developed to an extraordinary extent in the hymns as in the Brahmanas.

ASTRONOMY

§ 100. The drawing up of a ritual calendar to fix the proper times for the sacrifices was an obligation of Vedism at an early date ; hence observation of the celestial phenomena plays an important part in this system from earliest times. In response to this need the Jyotisha-Vedanga attributed to Lagadha, was compiled, a short and abstruse treatise preserved in two somewhat different recensions (43 slokas in that of the Yajus. 36 in that of the Rik), which have undergone some alteration. The Jyotisha gives the positions of the moon and the sun at the solstices, and allows of the calculation of the positions of the full and new moons in relation to the cycle of 27 mansions (nakshatra). An Atmajyotish of the Atharvaveda also exists, a short and recent work which sets forth the divisions of time, the names of the nakshatras, and the astrological facts which it is useful to know in connection with conception.

GRAMMAR

§ 101. As for the Vedanga of grammar (vyakarana), it may have been represented by one or more treatises in the Vedic period. Traces of these are to be noticed in the grammar of Panini, an important work which is dealt with elsewhere.

(i). THE SCHOOLS. THE VEDA AFTER THE VEDIC PERIOD

§ 102. The Vedic literature does not constitute a canon. Despite its sacred character, it is an open literature, to which new works and supplements to old texts could always establish a claim to be admitted. There is hardly a work which does not bear traces of amendment, so much so that it has been doubted whether there exists "a single ritual work corresponding exactly to one of our Samhitas" (Barth). Codification has taken a strict form in the Rigveda, where nevertheless adventi-

TABLE OF THE VEDIC SCHOOLS

	RIGVEDA		YAJURVEDA				SAMADEDA		ATHARVAVEDA
Samhita	Rik		Yajuh				Sama		Atharva
			Black Yajurveda			White Yajurveda or Vajasaneyi (Madhyamdina and Kanva)			
	Chakala	Vashkala	Kathaka and Kapishthala	Maitrayani	Taittiriya		Kauthuma Ranayaniya	Jaiminiya or Talavakara	Shaunaka and Paippalada
Brahmana	Aitareya	Kaushitaki or Shankhayana	Katha (fragmentary)		Taittiriya	Brihad (two recensions)	Panchavimsha or Tandyamaha Shadvimsha	Jaiminiya Shatyayana	Gopatha
Aranyaka	Aitareya	Kaushitaki or Shankhayana	Katha (fragmentary)		Taittiriya	Shatapatha (two recensions)	Aranyakasamhita Aranyakagana	Jaiminiya-upanishad-brahmana	
Upanishad	Aitareya	Kaushitaki	Katha (fragmentary)	Maitri	Taittiriya Shvetashvatara (or Mantra) Mahanarayana	Brihadaranyaka (two recensions) Isha or Ishavasya (two recensions)	Chhandogya	Kena	Mundaka Mandukhya Prashna etc.
Shrautasutra	Ashvalayana	Shankhayana	(Yajna) Kathaka (fragmentary)	Manava Varaha	Baudhayana Vadhula (fragmentary) Bharadvaja Apastamba Hiranyakeshin or Satyashadha Vaikhanasa	Katyayana	Latyayana Drahyanyna Mashaka or Arsheyakalpa	Jaiminiya	Vaitana

Grihyasutra	Ashvalayana	Shankhayana (two recensions)	Kathaka or Laugakshi	Manava Varaha	Baudhayana Vadhula Bharadvaja Apastamba Hiranyakeshin Vaikhanasa	Paraskara or Katiya	Gobhila Khadira Drahyayna	Jaiminiya	Kaushika
Dharmasutra				Manava (?)	Baudhayana Apastamba Hiranyakeshin Vaikhanasa	Shankhalikhita	Gautama		Pathinasi
Shulvasutra			Laugakshi	Manava Varaha	Baudhayana Vadhula Apstamba Hiranyakeshin	Katyayana			
Pratishakhya	Rik				Taittiriya	Vajasaneyi or Shuklayajurveda	Riktanatra Samatantra Pushpasutra Panchavidha		Atharva (Chaturadhyayika) (two recensions)
Smriti	Vasishtha		Vaishnava	Ushanas Harita Manu	Bharadvaja	Yajnavalkya Shankhalikhita	Gautama (?)		
Purana			Brahma (?) Vashnudharmottara	Chaturvimshati		Agni	Markandeya		
Others	Nirukta Anukramani Brihaddevata Rigvidhana		Baudhayanaparishishta Mantrapatha Mantrasamhita			Arsheyabrahmana Samavidhana Nidanasutra Mantrabrahmana etc.		Arsheyabrahmana	Atharvavedaparishishta

tious elements have found a way in (see § 6). There have been borrowings, and transfers of material.

This indeterminate character is explained by the working of the schools. To tell the truth, it is not easy to understand exactly what a Vedic school may have been, the character of its relations with a given text, and most of all the way in which the "branch" (shakha) became detached form the trunk. In view of the innumerable denominations known to tradition, it is hard to think that in origin it was anything more than a matter of "oral copies" (Muller) of a Samhita, distributed among the Brahman families, into which in course of time small divergences were introduced. On the other hand, if we consider the existing Vedas, we see that at least in the Yajus there are profound differences, the early history of which is unkown to us.

To these differences between one Samhita and another are to be added the differences between one Brahmana and another, and finally, and most important, those between the Sutras. At bottom the true schools are the schools of Sutra, in which special practices were established, in particular proper methods of reciting mantra and yajus : "the history of the Vedic schools is the history of the ritual formulae" (Knauer). The Indian commentaries rightly distinguish the shakha, which have their own Samhitas, and the charana or "courses", which were differentiated one from another only by the Sutras, or at most by the Brahmanas. The school is designated in principle by the name of the founder, and this name in the plural refers in general to the adepts of the school.

§ 103. Some facts about the schools are found in the Puranas, in Hemadri, in various commentaries (thus in that of Ramakrishna on Paraskara—Simon), and here and there in a number of inscriptions. But some come from the very end of the Vedic era : these are those furnished by the Anandasamhita, a text of the Vaikhanasa, and by the Charanavyuha, "exposition of the schools", which belongs to the class of parishishta. We have nothing from earlier periods.

The most prevalent traditions accord 5 or 21 schools to the Rigveda, 86 or 101 to the Yajus (according as the 15 of the White Yajus are or are not included), 1000 for the Sama (but the lists never contain more than 60 names), and 9 for the Atharva. Little is said in detail about them, and the order of enumeration rarely indicates any priority. The puranic tradition has in view a unique Veda, divided into four by the teaching which Vyasa inparted to his four disciples, and then the schools came into being through the transmission of the successors of these first disciples.

§ 104. The geographical situation is not known with certainty, and it would be illegitimate to make inferences as to earlier times from what we are told about the country at later dates. The Taittiriya is ascribed to the south, the Maitrayaniya and the Shankhayana to Gujerat or more broadly to the country north of the Narmada, the Vajasaneyin to the north-east and the east (Videha), the Katha and the Kapishthala to Kashmir and the Panjab. Among the Taittiriya, while some branches may have spread to the south, in particular the Apastamba, Baudhayana (Andhra), Vadhula (Malabar), Vaikhanasa (Coromandel), the others seem to have remained in the north (or to have returned there ?), the Hiranyakeshin on the Ganges, and the Bharadvaja on the Yamuna. The Ranayaniya branch of the Samaveda is supposed to have lived in the Maratha country. It is hardly possible to support these indications from modern teachings, since the distribution at the present day is confused, and the schools have all but disappeared (Bhandarkar).

THE VEDA IN CLASSICAL INDIA

§ 105. Even omitting from consideration an apocryphal poem like the Suparnakhyana or Suparnadhyaya, a ballad in a pseudo-vedic style on the legend of Kadru and Vinata, or again an artificial collection like the Nitimanjari of Daya Dviveda (XVth century) which groups mantras together in illustration of didactic maxims, the whole of Sanskrit literature is impregnated with Vedic reminiscences. Upanishads and Dharmasutras continue to be produced down to the Middle Ages, and the former, which are often (quite wrongly) regarded as the Veda *per excellence*, have provided religious and literary inspiration down to our own day, as to Tagore. The sutra form of prose has furnished the model for the basic texts in most technical subjects. Grammar issued from reflection on the Veda. Among the philosophical doctrines, the two Mimamsas comment directly on the Vedic thought, and the Karmamimamsa in particular is in origin nothing but an explanation of the ritual. Early Buddhism develops the doctrine of the Upanishads or a similar line of thought. At all times times the religious texts, the Puranas, Tantras and Stotras, adhere to the structure of Vedism. Commentaries have been written down to the modern era, the Arya Samaj movement has even shown a revival of Vedism, rather nationalistic, however, than strictly religious, while Theosophy, Indian equally with western, has turned these ancient texts in the direction of a new esotericism (Avalon says that in Shakta circles they talk of a second, unpublished, part of the Atharvaveda, called the Saubhagya).

§ 106. The public rituals remained in use for some time, while the domestic rites were taken over into the Hindu syncretism. The Shrauta or performers of the public rituals are today extremely few, while the Smarta, who maintain the rituals "of the Smriti", together with adherence to the cult of the Five Gods, are still a very large number. From an antiquarian point of view the distinction should be made between the Yajnika, who perform the sacrifices, the Vaidika, who know by heart their Veda, together with the associated texts, and the Shrotriya, who are specialists in the Shrautasutra (Bhandarkar). Ninety percent of Brahmans are Yajurvedins.

2. BELIEFS

INTERODUCTORY

§ 107. The essential part of the Vedic system of beliefs consists in an assemblage of myths, in relation to which all the rest, even the cosmogony and above all the eschatology, are of secondary importance. These myths can be divided into three groups corresponding to three social categories—myths of sovereignty, myths of war, and myths of reproduction. They are not merely an arbitrary jumble, although fiction has introduced some modifications and even created some of them : they are closely related to the rituals. But the connection, often only secondary, between a given myth and its corresponding ritual, escapes us in large measure.

The background of the Vedic mythology is naturalistic. However, the natural fact is rarely presented in its pure state, but appears to have resulted from an assimilation ; the battles of a god, for example, having been identified with the manifestations of the storm. At least in the Rigveda we notice a tendency to transfer the scenery and story of myths to the sky.

The figures which occur in the myths are strongly anthropomorphised, but not to a uniform extent ; they are often also presented as animals, but not to such an extent as to affect their behaviour, which remains human.

§ 108. Vedic thought moves on several different planes, each fact being susceptible of more than one interpretation. The language has had a certain effect, and a symbolism has been created which tends to mask the older meanings. As a result of a sort of levelling down, the divine figures, which at first were individualised, have taken on a certain uniformity.

These divine figures are many. The number of the gods cannot be stated, since there is no clear distinction between the divine and the non-divine, and since everything, down to the implements of the cult and abstract ideas, can be divinised at a given moment and from a given point of view. It is in this fluid form, and not as a stable system of thought, that we can speak of a Vedic pantheism (more exactly, with Otto, of a theopantism) : the universe is not divine, but the divine is the universe, the universe is a function of the divine, which is at the same time within things and external to them.

§ 109. Elevation to the divine level proceeds form participation in the sacred. Thus a man can attain to the divine level, and it is not to be doubted that at the root of more than one Vedic story lie legends, fragments of historical fact.

At the time when he is invoked, each divinity is regarded as the supreme divinity ; he is given the highest prerogatives, and even attributes which belong properly to others. It is through this shifting that the process of levelling takes place ; it is to be explained in part by the Indian technique of hymnology (in a repertory of hymns one draws from a set of interchangeable formulae) and in part by an undeniable tendency towards monotheism. This is the phenomenon which Max Muller called henotheism or kathenotheism. We can preserve the word without giving it his meaning of a deliberately developed system.

Another remarkable feature of Vedism is that it does not involve a hierarchy, an organised pantheon. Certainly some gods are invoked more often or in a more urgent manner, but this does not necessarily correspond to the importance of the divine figure in question. Side by side with the gods there is also a vast, indeed unlimited domain of "special gods" ; some of these are emanations from a more diversified personality, whose attributes have been split apart, a frequent occurrence in later Vedism. These divisions, as also the fusion of images, may reflect divergences between tribes and families.

§ 110 Standing in contrast to the world of the gods is the world of the demons, but less clearly defined : there is no great principle of Evil, but a cloud of minor and indistinct evils. Sometimes the same individual or the same idea bears the demoniac aspect side by side with its divine aspect : an instance of the ambivalence which has played so important a part right through the growth of Indian thought.

The Vedic religion is seen in the process of evolution. In the hymns themselves the Aditya form a sort of background, a residue of pre-Vedic ideas. After the stage of the hymns, the representation of the god becomes less distinct, act takes the place of myth, and eventually doctrine takes the place of act. As we view the texts in sequence, we doubtless overemphasise this transformation, separating what may have been simultaneous, and veiling ancient forms behind irrelevant interpretations.

THE INDO-EUROPEAN HERITAGE

§ 111. The Vedic Indians inherited from the Indo-Europeans the outlines, meanings, themes of myths rather than precise figures : Varuna, perhaps, who is certainly the Sky Father, but on Indian soil he soon ceases to be important. They inherited a clear, full conception of the divine, the name, deva, of which is inseparable from the name of the day and of the luminous sky (Meillet).

It seems that the Indo-Europeans developed, beyond the elementary worship of the sky and the earth, the stars, the wind and water, the notion of a sovereign deity of double aspect, the lawgiver and the terrible ; and on the other hand they recognised a division of society into three classes, those practising magic-religious activities, political and warlike activities, and economic and productive activities, a division which, coinciding with the rise of a strong priestly power and of a well-established military class, had important effects upon the religious system (Benveniste, Dumezil).

Among the myths which may come form Indo-European sources are the fight with the dragon, the descent of fire, and the drink which confers immortality. But such themes may have been of Asian or "primitive" origin, and may merely have been adopted by the Indo-Europeans. In the same way different origins have been suggested for the cult of the Earth Mother (and of the sacred marriage with the Sky), and more generally for the cult of the Great Mother (Przyluski), for the adoration of the thunder-god and for the cult of the horse (Koppers), which in part took the place of the bull.

Ethical values were of a low order, and the relations of man to the divine were on a quite different plane from that found in the Semitic religions (Lommel). It is probable that worship of the dead and the spirits of the dead was already developed.

THE INDO-IRANIAN HERITAGE

§ 112. In spite of close agreement in formulae and themes, it is not easy to say exactly what India has preserved from the common Indo-Iranian source. The notion of sovereignty was associated with an "Asura", which in Iran gave rise to Ahura Mazdah, and in India to Varuna ; these deities have the same connections with Mithra and Mitra respectively, and similar groups of followers, the Amesha Spenta and the Aditya, and even the same ethico-cosmic basis, the asha and the rita. The great change which religious ideas undergo in passing from India to Iran is explained partly by the Zoroastrian reform, which obscured the memory of the cult of fire and of the sacrifice of haoma or soma, while new ideas, developing in both countries, brought about a divergence between the conceptions attached to Vayu and Vayu, and diminished the importance of the god who "destroyed obstacles", Verethragna or Vritrahan.

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EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

§ 113. We have referred above (§111) to a possible influence of Asian cults. The Dravidian (or pro-Dravidian) religion may have left its mark, inserting into the Aryan forms ideas new to the high cult, as in the evolution of Rudra into Shiva, or even the evolution of the Rigvedic Rudra into the Yajurvedic Rudra. Dravidian or more generally non-Aryan influences have been assumed in the snake cult, the idea of transmigration, etc. (Brown and others). Popular ideas appear in a public rite such as the Rajasuya (Weber); all the more therefore in the domestic ceremonies and magical practices. In some places the Aryanisation of the Veda gives the impression of being superficial.

As for the Babylonian contribution which has often been assumed (as in the origin of the nakshatras, and the interpretation of the Adityas), the idea has recently lost favour. It is still admitted, however, for the myth of the deluge (Winternitz), and correlations have been suggested recently in regard to the horse sacrifice (Dumont), and in certain cosmogonic ideas (see § 184).

Despite all this, it remains true that the Vedic religion is an Indian creation. If some material was borrowed, all its elements were brought together in a new system, which bears the powerful impress of the Brahmanic spirit.

THE DIVINITIES

§ 114. The gods of the Veda are active and passionate beings who intervene in human affairs. Though their attitude is initially doubtful, homage renders them propitious; even if they are to be feared, they become the friends of men through prayers. They are also friends among themselves, or at least united against the demons; however, in later mythology, discord reigns among them also. The attitude of men to them is not that of a slave. A man adores them and flatters them, but he knows that he has a hold on them. This power is that of the word, the characterising word or praise (shamsa), which puts the god under an obligation in the measure that it refers to him.

Otto has demonstrated the numinous character of the Vedic divinities. Each of them is an assemblage of divine powers, of diverse origins, polarised in "forces".

The gods number 33, a figure known also in Iran; the Brahmanas divide them into 8 Vasus, 11 Rudras, 12 Adityas, and two undefined divinities, while the Nirukta classes them as terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial. They will be described here more comprehensibly according to their functions: sovereign gods, Varuna, Mitra, etc.; warrior gods, Indra and his group, the Maruts, who are connected with Rudra ; the solar divinities, Vishnu and Ashvins ; the deified manifestations of the cult, Agni and Soma ; and the minor or later established gods.

MORAL IDEAS

§ 115. The ethical aspect is not conspicuous in Vedism. The atmosphere of the hymns remains narrowly materialistic : everything is summed up in the formula *do ut des*. Dakshina, ritual payment, often deified, is the immediate object of prayer, and about many ritual practices the only exact knowledge we have is of the dakshina paid for them. However, moral ideas find expression in the hymns to the Aditya, especially Varuna, and sometimes also in those to Agni : here appears a notion of sin, entirely material, it is true, and independent of intention, a sort of defilement which is effacted by remedies of a magical type, the prayashchitta (see § 218). The dominant idea is that of "bonds", pasha, which the guilty tries to escape from, and the innocent to save himself from, a conception which does not exclude that of punishment inflicted by the deity. In the Brahmanas the notion of sin expands and becomes oppressive, but it is associated almost entirely with ritual errors. We have to come down to the latest parts of the Veda (Chhandogya Upanishad, Samavidhana Brahmana) to find lists of faults which have reference to moral vaues. In the Shatapatha Brahmana there is mention of a sort of confession.

So far as the texts speak of "duties" (in the Brahmanas), these duties are felt as similar to debts : to the Rishis the study of the Veda is owed as a debt, to the gods the sacrifice, to the forefathers progeny, and to men hospitality. There are also the duties of caste, but the essential duties are first truth, then of giving gifts, and then of the mastery of the self. More elaborate lists figure in the Upanishads.

VARUNA

§ 116. Often associated with Mitra, less often honoured alone, and but little represented in the hymns, Varuna is nonetheless one of the major gods of the Vedic religion, and that one in whom it is easiest to find the characteristics of monotheism. He is only slightly encumbered with anthropomorphic characteristics (the eye, the golden mantle in which he wraps himself, etc.)

Creator and sustainer of the worlds—he has inherited some of the prehistoric functions of Dyaus—he is the "sovereign", samraj. From him derives the kshatra, the civil dominium. He is qualified as asura, "master", and with the attribute of maya, the "faculty of constructing forms" ; and he establishes and maintains the natural and moral law, the rita, under its ethical aspect of "order". From this point of view his function consists in punishing : he catches and punishes the sinful by means of his "noose", he is the Binder ; he is also the All-seeing, and spies watch on his behalf. On the other hand he delivers the repentant sinner. Finally he has some connection with water, as giver of rain, and giver also of the disease of hydropsy ; he is or has been in possession of the soma. Though not stressed to the same extent, all these characters are present from the origin of the tradition, without any important myth being associated with them.

§ 117. After the Rigveda, the association of Varuna with Mitra changes to an antithesis. In relation to Mitra-day, Varuna is the night, implicitly, no doubt, the moon as opposed to Mitra-sun. The connection with water becomes more pronounced. Altogether he has little apparent role in the ritual ; though in certain cases, as in the Rajasuya, Indra has taken his place. There is in fact evidence that the sovereignty of Varuna preceded that of Indra, and hymns IV.42 and X. 129 show a rivalry between the two divinities. When Varuna assumes an active role, as after the bath of "carrying away", Varunapraghasa, he appears an obscure person vaguely assimilated to a god of death, a repulsive figure from which one turns away. After the hymns his majesty is no longer surrounded with mystery ; he was approached with humility, and though we cannot go so far as Bergaigne and regard him as "semi-demoniac" figure, it cannot be denied that his power was ambivalent and sometimes sinister.

§ 118. There have not been so many hypotheses about the genesis of any other Indian divinity. As opposed to the conservative theory, maintained by Keith, which regards Varuna as a sky god and supports the relation with Ouranos on the basis of the root var-, "to envelop", he has been identified as the god of the moon (Hillebrandt ; aiso Oldenberg, as part of an interpretation concerning the planets, (see § 120), as the power of sickness and death (Otto), as an earth god associated with vegetation (J. J. Meyer), as a god of the sea, either Asian (Kretschmer) or Austroasiatic (Przyluski), and more generally as a god of the waters (Ronnow). It is easier to agree that he is an ancient sovereign god, with Bergaigne, Guntert and Dumezil ; this last has revived the idea of a connection with Ouranos, depending on the notion of a "binding" god (root var-, "to bind"), who met with rivalry from his relatives and was emasculated by one of them (cf. the Ouranos myth and the indications drawn from the Rajasuya, (§ 213). One point is established, though Lommel has recently argued against it : the Indian Varuna and his Avestan counterpart, the god of the daytime sky (Nyberg), Ahura Mazda, expanded into the supreme divinity, presuppose an Indo-Iranian *Varuna.

MITRA

§ 119. The personality of Mitra is insignificant in the Veda, where only one hymn is addressed to him. But everything indicates that his role had been far more important, and that his attributes have been taken from him by Varuna, with whom he shared the cosmic, ethical and judicial functions. Only one characteristic is distinctive of him : he "holds men to their engagements", urging them to associate together. We have seen (§117) that in the ritual an antithesis develops between Mitra and Varuna, and it is on the basis of this evidence that he is commonly associated with the sun. The corresponding Iranian deity Mithra, who occupies a far more important place, is also a god of light (Hertel), but first of all a social, contractual god (Nyberg), whose warlike character must have been borrowed by an *Indra who became merged with him (Guntert). It is here that we have to look for the origin of the Vedic Mitra, who is thus not only a sovereign god (Bergaigne), but the "allied" (cf. the common noun mitra), or more exactly the "contract" personified (Meillet), root mi--, "to exchange". He is thus the counterpart, benevolent, juridical and sacerdotal, of the majestic and terrible sovereign which Varuna represents.

THE ADITYA

§ 120. Varuna and Mitra are members of the group of the Aditya, a name traditionally interpreted as "sons of (the goddess) Aditi". Their number is eight (seven on one level, the eighth, Martanda, being an addition) ; the classical number of twelve is not found earlier than the Shatapatha. The names are variable. The chief is Varuna, and those most often mentioned after him are Mitra and Aryaman ; this last being of solar origin (Hillebrandt), the god of marriage like the Iranian Airyaman (Konow), but rather the god of hospitality and of the house (Thieme), or the personification of membership of the Aryan community (Dumezil). Of less importance are Bhaga, "distributive chance" (baga, "god" in general in Iran), Amsha, "portion", and Daksha, "will". Taken as a group, these divinities have a cosmic-solar aspect and an ethical role : they share the different functions of sovereignty. The word Aditya sometimes designates "the gods" collectively. They are often, though perhaps wrongly, related to the Amesha Spenta, the "active immortals" of the Avesta, who form with Ahura Mazda a group of "social efficacy" (Nyberg) and are the representatives of the various aspects of sovereignty. Not much importance is attached nowadays to the planetary interpretation of Oldenberg (the sun, the moon, and the five known planets), which assumes that the ideas are of Babylonian origin, or to the Sumerian variant which B. Geiger tried to revive.

As to the goddess Aditi, the name means, as a common noun, "the fact of not being tied" (by faults, or by darkness), or perhaps "infinitude" (Oldenberg, Guntert, Neisser). The ethical aspect is manifest in this personage, whom Hillebrandt regards as an entity of light, and Przyluski as the Indian image of the Great Mother. It is undoubtedly a case of a secondary form, owing its subsistence to the word Aditya (Macdonnell, Keith), just as at a later period the goddess Diti and her sons the Daitya were formed from the same word.

INDRA

§ 121. The preeminent god of the Veda is Indra, preeminent as much by the number of hymns addressed to him as by the wealth of the myths about him. Also by the vigorous character ascribed to his person and comportment : he has a body, arms, hands, a belly into which he takes the soma, there are references to his lips, his jaws, his beard. His stature is gigantic, his colour "tawny", like that of the horses which draw his chariot, "yoked by prayer". His weapon, made for him by Tvashtri, is a kind of club, the vajra or "thunderbolt", which stands mythically for the lightning. He is the "wielder of the thunderbolt". It is by means of the vajra, "increased" by the soma, that he performs his fabulous exploits, the essence of his warlike nature. These exploits begin with his birth (he is alone among the Vedic gods in having a birth) ; in fact he wills to emerge from the womb through his mother's side. There are frequent allusions to his mother, and to his father, from whom he has taken away the soma, and whom he has even killed (the father is often identified as Tvashtri). He has many relatives. His wife is Indrani ("she of Indra"), and in more recent Vedic books other names are known, in particular Shachi (which in the hymns means "energy", Shachipati designating Indra as "master of energy", more often than as "husband of Shachi").

§ 122. He is also the only Vedic god who possesses vices, and thereby incurs certain dangers : in the hymns it is his immoderate love for the soma, and later it is his amorous adventures, as in the episode of Ahalya.

Indra is associated in various ways with most of the other gods, and first of all with his immediate companions the Maruts (he is marutvant, "the possessor of the Maruts"). He also has relations with the Ashvins, though these are perhaps secondary. His strength, his unlimited power, are emphatically proclaimed. He surpasses even the gods, he is "governed by himself" (svaraj) ; he is young, and at the same time has existed from time immemorial. Among the other terms describing him may be mentioned shatakratu, "possessing a hundred powers", Vritrahan, slayer of Vritra", and above all maghavan, "the bounteous", a term which sums up all that the faithful expect of him.

His exploits are of an essentially warlike type. The most frequently applauded is that by which, with his thunderbolt, he killed the dragon (ahi) Vritra, a demon-magician who had stopped the flow of the waters, damming them with the mountain; Vritra having been killed, the waters flowed freely. Whence the name Vritrahan, a term which must be associated with the Iranian name Verethragna, the god "of the victorious offensive" (Benveniste), and of strength in general (Nyberg). In India this divinity was amalgamated with Indra, and it is probable that from the name Vritrahan the demon Vritra was created (the primary sense of the word vritra is "resistance", whence "enemy"), the myth being borrowed from the many types of combat between the hero and the dragon (Benveniste). After the period of the Rigveda Vritra becomes a Brahman, and by killing him Indra commits a crime which he has to expiate.

§ 123. Other demons conquered by Indra are Arbuda, Vishvarupa (see § 153) and the Dasyus (see § 151), Namuchi, Shushna, and still others; behind these stories there may lurk traces of historical fact. These themes must have been associated with initiation rituals. The theme of the liberation of the waters, evidently naturalistic in origin, is often confused with other mythical themes, the conquest of light, of the sun, of the divine waters, and the production of the dawn, or with human events which have been given a mythical colouring, such as the deliverance of cows seized by another demon ("obstacle"), Vala. Indra is also in conflict with the Dawn, whose chariot he destroys, and with the Sun (in an obscure myth concerning a chariot race between the Sun and the stallion Etasha); refer also to an analogous story about the Ashvins (see § 128).

The supporter of the warriors, Indra is the protector of their caste. Princes fight for him or receive his help. Everything suggests that in his wars against the Dasa Indra was the patron of the invading Aryans; the episode of the Ten Kings (see § 242) makes his role clear.

These facts point to a warrior god (Guntert), a god of strength (Lommel), who was no doubt originally a hero (Benveniste) secondarily deified. While in Iran he was degraded into a demon, in India he absorbed and summed up all the primitive heroes and "breakers of resistance". Myth and ritual carry traces which show that his personality was formed at the expense of many others. His special animal symbol is the bull, the type of the male. His name is mentioned during the midday oblation in the Agnishtoma and other soma rites, and also in agricultural rites. It is possible that originally he played only a limited part in this domain, and that he had to conquer the soma, to which he had no right (Ronnow).

The etymology of the name is uncertain ; according to Kretschmer, who compares it with the Hittite Inar (as), it is an Asian loan word. He is a clan god secondarily magnified (Otto), or the "national" god of the Aryans (Lommel). Nowadays it is usual to reject or at least to minimise the significance of naturalistic explanations such as those which represent him as the god of thunder, or of sun (the springtime sun triumphing over the snows—Hillebrandt), a phallic god and god of fecundity (Meyer), or god of the moon (Koppers).

THE MARUTS

§ 124. The Maruts are a band of "young men" (marya), the sons of Rudra (whence their name of Rudras or Rudriyas) and the mottled cow Prishni. Always together, they traverse the sky in their golden chariots drawn by tawny or dappled horses. Clothed in rain, they send down the rain and create or direct the storm. Their progress causes a great disturbance : they are "singers". Their association with the lightning is clear ; whence the reddish gleam of their ornaments and arms. Their appearance is terrifying, sometimes malevolent. Nevertheless they are usually helpful gods, who support Indra in his wars and recognise him as their chief ; though it is true that in some passages they abandon him and (in the Brahmanas) are hostile. In these texts the Maruts are described leaders of the class of cattle-raisers and agriculturists.

In post-vedic usage the word marut means "wind", and it is clear that descriptions of the storm and the lightning make use of mythical ideas (Keith). But it is possible that this derives from a social phenomenon : according to Wikander "society of men" of warlike and "savage" character and with esoteric formulae and practices. The etymology of the word is unknown ; the ritual gives few indications, though according to Hillebrandt it points to an interpretation of the Maruts as spirits of the dead.

RUDRA

§ 125. The Maruts lead back to Rudra, a god of minor importance in the Rigveda but of marked individuality, of varied but highly coloured appearance, and with a varied armament in which the bow and arrows are already predominant. A number of names and formulae are associated with him. He is often identified with Agni as the terrifying form of fire. In the Yajurveda, where a striking litany is devoted to him, he receives the name Tryambaka ("he who has three mothers"?), and various other designations which apply to different aspects of his character, such as Sharva (compare the demon Saurva of Iran) or the collective Rudras (distinct from the Rudras=Maruts ?). Again he is called Shiva, the "gracious", Hara, the "destroyer", Sankara, the "beneficent", Mahadeva, the "great divinity". His dwelling place is in the forest or the mountain, and his dominion is over animals, wild and domesticated. In brief, his most noteworthy characteristic is the fear which he inspires : the prayer addressed to him becomes a deprecation, the formulae associated with him are formulae of prohibition, he is a god of taboos. But this aspect, though it is the more emphasised, is only the inverse of his role as helper, redresser of wrongs, magical curer, "healer of healers". In the ritual Rudra's functions are separated from those of the gods, and the remains of the oblation are assigned to him, together with that destined for the demons. Finally his name is associated with an ecstatic form of ascesis.

§ 126. The etymology is uncertain ("the red", or "the howler"?). It is no longer thought (though Keith still believes) that we have in Rudra a nature god in a pure form, symbolical of the storm and the thunderbolt, even in the modified form of a "god of the terrors of the cold season and the rains" (Hillebrandt). It is better, following Arbman, to bring to the front the popular, wild, semi-demoniac figure of the post-rigvedic Rudra (very different from the more "celestial" Rudra of the Rigveda), a god of death who is also a god of fecundity, who is transformed gradually into the classical Shiva. Lommel claims to discern here a non-Aryan borrowing, while Otto and Hauer regard the more ancient Rudra, at least, as an essentially Aryan type, which Hauer makes the god of the Vratya (§210).

TRITA APTYA

§ 127. Trita ("the third") Aptya ("situated in the waters") is a sort of minor replica of Indra, who has pushed him into the background. Like Indra, he fights and defeats Vritra, Vala, and above all the three-headed demon Vishvarupa, son of Tvashtri. He prepares the soma (which he has perhaps stolen from the dragon) and is associated with Agni. A spirit of ceremonial cleansing, he is in the ritual the scapegoat of the gods (Bloomfield), he who "receives" maladies and bad dreams. In the Avesta the corresponding figure is divided into those of Thraetona, son of Athwya (who kills Azi Dahaka), and of Thrita, father of Kereshaspa, another slayer of a dragon. Ronnow regards Trita as a god of the waters, and thus by his nature connected with the soma and the drink of immortality. Wust regards him as a solar hero, son of Dyaus.

THE ASHVINS

§ 128. The Ashvins are twins, who are spoken of as two forming a unity, rarely as a single person. They are sons of Dyaus ; they make their journey accross the heavens in their golden chariot drawn by birds, or sometimes by horses. They are seen at dawn. Beautiful, young, quick moving, their typical epithet is dasra "miraculous". Nasatya is doubtless their true name (there is a single figure called Nasatya in the Avesta, who belongs to the group of the daeva), since the word ashvin means merely "possessor of horses". A number of miraculous attributes are ascribed to them, among which there may be recognised mythified legends, and possibly even historical allusions. These emphasise their role as "helpers", heroes who save and heal. Thus they restored the decrepit Chyavana's youth, and saved Bhujyu, son of Tugra, from sinking in the sea, and rescued Atri whom a demon had put into a burning pot. They are connected with honey (madhu) ; helped by Dadyanch they procured it for the gods, while together with Sarasvati they introduced the wine sura into the cult. But their most prominent trait is that after having been refused the soma on account of their impurity they were reconciled to Indra and entered into a pact with the gods, so that they were admitted to the sacrifice, where they functioned thereafter as adhvaryu. They are also the husbands or consorts of Surya, the daughter of the sun ; they are invoked at the time of marriages. In the ritual the adoration of the Ashvins normally takes place in the morning, thus emphasising their connection with the rising sun.

The Ashvins have been explained as personifications of the dawn (and of the twilight), of the stars known to us as the Gemini, of the sun and moon, and more plausibly of the morning and evening stars (Oldenberg, taken up again by Guntert). They have been compared to the Dioscuri, while Geldner regards them as divinised human healers. Like the Maruts they are patrons of the class of cattle-raisers and farmers, originally perhaps even of the Shudras.

VISHNU

§ 129. Vishnu comes to occupy a place in the first rank only in the prose texts. In the Rigveda what is said about him, apart from praise such as is addressed to any god whatever, is that he traverses space or the world in three strides, of which the first two are visible, and the third, "beyond the flight of the birds", takes him to the abode of the gods. Hence his name of Urugaya and Urukrama, "he who strides far". He is an ally of Indra, whom he helps in defeating Vritra and for whom he prepares the soma. He is also associated with the Maruts. The theme of the three strides is developed in the Brahmanas, where they are explained as earth, intermediate space and sky ; this refers to the myth that having lost their supremacy over the Asuras, the gods agree with them upon a division of the world whereby they will take as much as Vishnu, disguised as a dwarf, can cover in three strides, and Vishnu then strides across the three worlds. The ritual bears traces of this theme, which has an Iranian parallel, the three strides of the Amesha Spenta. Vishnu is very commonly identified with the sacrifice, and many mythical traits are related to this assimilation. Altogether it is his association with Indra which is the most important : from Indra come certain characteristics which make up the expanded figure of the classical Vishnu. In the ritual Vishnu has little connection with the soma, despite the fact that he is so often associated with it in the myths.

The name is obscure (vi + sanu, "he who crosses the heights" (of the sky), and alternatively "active", from root vish –, have been suggested). According to Przyluski it is non-Aryan. While Oldenberg regards him merely as the being who takes long strides (such, perhaps, as a bird-god), the commonly accepted view is that he is of solar origin, a representation of the motion of the sun (Keith). This is not incompatible with the view that he is a vegetation and phallic spirit (Guntert), whence the epithet shipivista, "attained by the penis", may be explained. The story of the three strides may be the origin of the avataras of Vishnuism (Guntert).

PUSHAN

§ 130. The individuality of Pushan is not distinct. He has some characteristics in common with Agni, and some with Surya, whose daugther he has married. He is distinguished by one important trait : he knows and guards roads, protects men and animals from the dangers of the road, and finds lost animals and objects. He is the giver of abundance (his name is connected with the root push –, "to prosper"), and emphatic praises are offered to him. His food is barley porridge. We have no more than traces of his cult, for which a solar origin is suggested (Keith). He has been regarded as an early god of roads (Oldenberg), and as a god of light introduced by a pastoral clan (Hillebrandt), while Guntert regards him as the god of such a clan assimilated to the sun or perhaps rather to the moon.

SOLAR DIVINITIES

§ 131. There is a group of figures whose connection with the sun is clear and may be shown by the name Such is Surya, "the sun", (his daughter is Suryâ), who is assimilated to a bird, and to an inanimate object, and is called an Aditya, without his identification with the sun being forgotten for a moment. This identification is less clear in the case of Savitri, "the inciter", a god "with golden hands", the morning sun which "incites" men to be about their business and life to resume its course ; he is also, secondarily, the setting sun, and more generally a sort of presiding deity of the sacrifice, the king of the world, the underlying idea of Varuna (Guntert). In the ritual his part is in the evening oblation. Among the myths of the Brahmanas may be mentioned the theme of mutilation : after a sacriffce spread by the gods, the first-fruits, which they offered to Savitri, "cut off his hands", just as they made Bhaga blind.

Oldenberg argues that the original character of Savitri was that of an agent, secondarily developed into a solar god ; the evidence of the hymns makes this hypothesis untenable.

Other gods of light are Aja Ekapad, "the one-legged goat" (an idea also known in Iran), which represents the sun (or the light, Keith) ; Rohita, "the red", in the Atharvaveda, a cosmic symbol ; and Vivasvant, "the brilliant" (Vivahvant in the Avesta), a solar god (Keith, Guntert), who functions in India and in Iran as a sort of first father of humanity.

USHAS

§ 132. The striking images with which the Rigvedic poets describe Ushas. the goddess of the dawn, have left the naturalistic representation in something like its original state. She is the girl who "uncovers her breast" to the fatal blow, awakens the creatures, drives away the darkness, and is eternally young. She travels in a luminous chariot. She is found in association with the sun, whose wife or lover she is, with night, whose sister she is, and with Agni as the fire of the morning oblation. She is the daughter of the sky, and the Brahmanas deal with the theme of her incest with her father Prajapati. Hillebrandt believes that she represents more particularly the dawn of the new year.

SKY AND EARTH

§ 133. The name Dyaus ("sky" ; also "day", as a common noun) refers to the father of the gods (cf. Dyaus pita, which corresponds to Jupiter, Zeus pater), but his function is that of the father of the family rather than that of creator in the fashion of Zeus. For the most part he is invoked jointly with the Earth by the name Dyavaprithivi : this composite word, which is feminine (dyaus itself is often feminine, at least as a common noun), then designates the "parents" of the gods and of the worlds, and has some importance in the ritual. Another, but obscure, name for the couple is rodasi, the dual of a noun rodas. The Earth is also invoked alone, more often as substance and "mother" than as a goddess (except under the late name of Aditi). She is the "nourisher of beings", and images of a literary rather than religious character are associated with her.

VAYU

§ 134. In this case also the naturalistic basis is clear : Vayu is the "wind". However, when it is the element which is referred to, the form vata prevails. Vayu is anthropomorphised, with broad but ill-defined characteristics, and usually associated with Indra. In the ritual he goes at the head of the soma sacrifice, he "drinks first" ; generally he is the "breath" of the gods, the "purifier". In the Avesta Vayu is elevated to the place of the supreme god, the god of fate and of death, and it seems certain that his cult was important in the Indo-Iranian period (Wikander). In India, in his role of "breath" and "cosmic soul" he played a part down to the period of the upanishadic speculations.

Parjanya ("the destroyer" ?) is the god of rain, of the rainy season, often of the clouds and of the storm. There are lyrical descriptions of the power which he develops and of his fighting ; he is adored as the producer of vegetation and the procreator of life, the "father".

AGNI

§ 135. With Agni we come to a quite different world. Here the connection of the divine figure with the ritual is close and permanent. He is "fire" under its various forms, but most immediately under the form of the earthly hearth which is lit for the morning sacrifice. The poets never tire of describing his golden jaws, his locks of flame, his three or seven tongues, his effulgence, the black traces which he leaves behind, the noise and fright which he produces—here using images derived from forest fires. They compare him to a calf, a stallion, etc., they speak of the food which he consumes, especially the ghrita or melted butter ("heated thing"), which is the object of direct invocations. The accounts of his celestial functions are less numerous and more commonplace : seated in his chariot, Agni takes part in the cosmic operations, like the other gods with whom he is associated, and like Indra, whose exploits he shares. He is the son of Dyaus or of other divinities, but also their father, and a whole reversible genealogy is set up in connection with him.

§ 136. His birth, or rather his many births, are often dealt with : he emanates first of all form the arani (see § 195), whence perhaps his designation as "son of force". But his is an accidental origin ; in fact he is eternal and omnipresent. He takes birth in wood, in plants ; he is the "navel of the earth", and the gods discovered him hidden in the waters, terrestrial or aerial, or both, where he had also taken birth. He may thus be born also in the sky, whence he descends in the form of the lightning. But the celestial Agni is also the sun and is often fire, the lightning and the sun at the same time, the images being superimposed. His three births give the number three a mystical significance, which is the main theme of the formulae concerning Agni and is shown already in the triad of the ritual fires. Finally Agni burns sorcerers and demons, and is the "devourer of flesh" in the funeral practices : this constitutes his sinister or fearful aspeet.

He is intimately connected with human life : he is the "master of the house", the "domestic" god, the "head of the clan", and this connection is regarded as ancestral. He carries the oblation to the gods, and it is also he who brings the gods to the sacrifice : he is thus the "messenger" between earth and heaven in both directions. He is the sacrificer *par excellence*, and the prototype of the priest, the "chaplain" purohita, who concentrates in himself all the sacred functions ; he is thus assimilated to the first sacrificers, and it is said that he instituted the rites. According to the Brahmanas he feared the service of the gods and hid himself to escape from it. He is a saint (rishi), endowed with all knowledge, willing to help and a dispenser of benefits. He is called jatavedas, "he who knows all that is born".

The word is related to the Latin ignis, and could not have provided the name of a god except by adding to the images of fire those of the officiating priest and the metaphorical apparatus of the sacrifice. The importance of his role betrays the Vedic obsession with the sacrifice rather than reflecting a "doctrine of fire", in terms of which Hertel (who regards Agni as the symbol of the luminous powers of the sky, the producer of all life) tries to interpret the greater part of the religious forms of the Veda.

§ 137. Many names of gods are no more than manifestations of Agni, old titles which have become independent, or originally separate figures which have been attracted towards Agni. Such is Vaishvanara, "he who belongs to all men", the sun and fire ritual (the ahavaniya fire, according to Hillebrandt). Also Tanunapat "son of himself"?, who plays an obscure part. Narashmsa, related to the cult of the ancestral spirits (Hillebrandt), messenger of the gods like Agni (Guntert), in fact "praise of men" (Oldenberg), as his name indicates, is related to Agni in his capacity as first beneficiary of praise ; in the Avesta Nairyosanha is also a fire spirit and messenger of Ahura Mazda.

Other figures are more remote. Apam Napat, "son of the waters" (the same name occurs in the Avesta), is an ancient divinity of the waters associated with a lunar cult (Hillebrandt), and perhaps secondarily related to Agni (Oldenberg). Matarishvan ("he who swells in his mother" ?) is sometimes Agni, sometimes an independent person, the messenger who brings fire to men as a gift from the gods. Later, by an obscure transformation, he becomes an entity of the "wind".

Finally Brihaspati, "the master of the force (inherent in the incantation)", is no more than a recent double of Agni, more closely associated with the role of the sacrificer, the priest of the gods, and often assimilated to him. He is an ally of Indra in his battles, and plays a part in the myth of the rescue of the cows. While Oldenberg regards Brihaspati as the incantation personified, and others consider him a divinised priest, Hillebrandt and Keith prefer to trace him back to the image of the ritual fire.

SOMA

§ 138. Soma is equally a ritualistict-naturalistic figure which has been elevated spontaneously to the level of a divine function. He is only partially anthropomorphised, although Soma shares the functions of the other gods, such as conquering the light, "master of the regions", mounting a chariot like a warrior, and associating with various gods or heroes, with the Maruts and Indra among others, giving to the pious and protecting against the wicked.

But Soma is above everything else the sacrificial plant divinised : all the operations of pressing and more especially of purifying at the hands of the officiant and the woollen strainer (whence the name pavamana, "that which is purified") are described in infinite variations in the hymns of book IX, a vast mass of incantations which the poets addressed to the immortal essence of the some at the moment when it emerged from the press. This sort of mystical intoxication plays a large part in the Vedic cult and the associated myths. The symbolism of the number three is also to be found in these descriptions, as in those of Agni, as is also the connection with the waters and the divinities of the waters, which passes from the material plane to the cosmic level : the soma is the essence of the waters, and it ranks as a god of the waters.

§ 139. The "noise" which the soma makes as it gushes forth is celebrated in hyperbolical terms, and the idea of thunder brings with it that of lightning. It is compared to a bellowing bull, so much so that the waters with which it is mixed are cows. Its brightness is acclaimed, its rapidity, its exalting effect : conferring immortality, it is the amrita itself, the drink of immortality, the remedy *par excellence* which stimulates the flow of words, produces a sort of ecstasy, and confers all the delights. Like Agni it is a "sage," a priest. Its effect is beneficial for gods as for men : it "augments" Indra, himself the "killer of Vritra".

The terrestrial origin of Soma is in the mountain, on Mount Mujavant. But its true home is in heaven : "child of heaven", and its ritual form corresponds to those of its ritual birth and effusion. It was brought to earth by a great bird, eagle or falcon, who seized it from the brazen castle where it was guarded by the Gandharvas or the archer Krishanu who, shooting an arrow at it, struck from it one claw or one feather. Sometimes this eagle is Indra ; in the Brahmanas it is Gayatri, a mystical name of Agni, who seizes the soma.

Finally soma is the master of plants, which are therefore called saumya, "somic"; more generally it is the "king", the royal host of the ritual texts.

§ 140. Initially the interpretation is simple. It is possible that the soma drink (of which the first possessors, according to Ronnow, were Varuna and the Asuras, before it passed to the Devas and Indra) took the place of the Indo-European drink, madhu, "hydromel", and of the apparently popular sura (see § 190). It is in any case the Indo-Iranian form of the drink of immortality and of the oblatory liquid : the correspondence with the Iranian haoma extends as far as the detail of formulae, myths and speculations. As for the theme of the eagle, a naturalistic basis, involving light and rain, has been supposed Lommel regards soma as a multiform deity of the vital force, "less a figure than an idea".

One controversial question remains. In the Brahmanas the further assertion is made that Soma is the moon : the lunar phases result from the absorption by the gods and the Fathers of the substance of Soma made into amrita. Some late passages in the Rigveda state the somic nature of the moon. This identification must be of secondary occurrence, suggested by images like that of Indu, the "drop" of the sacred liquid, a celestial and luminous divinity which swells in the waters. It was in part a literary assimilation, the moon being described as a cup of soma which forever refilled itself for the gods. However, some authors consider that the identification has an authentic character, and Hillebrandt, followed recently by Koppers, has on this basis sketched a whole lunar mythology.

FEMALE DIVINITIES

§ 141. In addition to their part in myth, the Waters constitute a cosmic principle—Coomaraswamy speaks of a cosmology based on the waters—the habitation of the ambrosia, the source of universal life, the "mother of mothers". They are divinised under their proper name of apah, representing in general the rivers (there is no religious representation of the ocean). The chief name of these divine rivers is Sarasvati, whose praises surpass the limits to be expected in the case of a natural object. Sarasvati is a quite imposing figure, associated with the great gods, and identified in the Brahmanas with the word (Vach), which as far back as the Yajurveda is given as her instrument.

Although several male gods (Dyaus, Surya) tend to assume female aspects, the female divinities play a relatively minor part. In addition to Ushas and Aditi, there are Vach, the "word" (expressing the sacred praises), Shri, "beauty" (from the Satapathabrahmana onwards), Puramdhi (cf. Avestan Parendi), "plenitude", the spirit of fecundity, Dhishana, goddess of vegetation (Johansson), whose forms are at first confused, and Ila, the "offering", who inspires Manu and some others, in particular the gods resulting from the fragmentation of Agni. The gods have wives, to whom separate invocations are addressed in the ritual, but they are unstable figures. The abundant sexual representations in the Veda do not result in the creation of well-defined female figures.

GROUPS OF DIVINITIES

§ 142. The association of two gods in a "joint invocation" is characteristic of the Vedic pantheon. We have mentioned the case of Dyavaprithivi ; and the association of Mitra and Varuna, hardly less frequent, is of great significance. In the third place come the groups in which Indra figures as the predominant partner. In the case of the Ashvins the unification is almost complete.

Bigger groups are formed by the Maruts, the Adityas. the Rudras, later the Sadhyas, with Brahman at their head, and the Vasus, of whom Indra is the chief, and then Agni (the word means "good"; according to Hertel "luminous") : these latter groups are very indistinctly characterised. The most comprehensive group is the Vishve Devah "all-the-gods", which results from an anxiety to omit none of the divine persons from the laudatory prayers.

THE RIBHUS

§ 143. The Ribhus are three gods, Ribhukshan, Vaja and Vibhvan, who are rarely mentioned separtely. They are known as skilful artisans (ribhu means "skilled"), who have "fashioned" the chariot of the Ashvins, Indra's bay horses, and Brihaspati's cow, have "multiplied in four" Tvashtri's cup and have rejuvenated their parents. According to Hillebrandt, the three ancient divisions of the year are concealed under the names of these persons.

THE APSARAS

§ 144. The Apsaras (a name of uncertain origin) are water-nymphs, associated with, or the wives of, the Gandharvas, and later (secondarilly ?) associated with the tree cult. They are also represented as dancers and as gamblers, they have magical powers, and are emblematic of fecundity. The best known of them is Urvashi (see §15).

The Gandharvas (we hear also of the Gandharva in the singular) are more complex beings. In the Rigveda they are spirits of the clouds and the waters, and they have a relation with the soma, which sometimes they guard peacefully, and sometimes monopolise ; it is the hostile aspect, illustrated by the seizure of the soma by one of them, Vishvavasu, that predominates in the Veda. They are invoked during marriage rites, and are thought of especially in connection with women, conferring or refusing pregnancy, and playing the part of lovers. Arguing from the myth of Urvashi, Dumezil holds that they are spirits of the new year, a group of initiates forming a sort of sect. Thence he is led to emphasise once more the identification of the Gandharvas with the Centaurs, which earlier generations of students admitted.

DIVINISED ABSTRACTIONS

§ 145. As in the Avesta, abstract ideas are divinised, permanently or temporarily. They are usually the great forces of nature, and the corresponding gods are only their instruments or animated projections of them. First is rita, the cosmic, ritual and moral order, all in one (the order of things), thought of as equivalent to or superior to the gods, among whom it is relaled most closely to Varuna. The primary sense of the word is "movement" or "adaptation" (Goldenberg), while Wust suggests an agricultural origin (the furrow). The corresponding term asha of the Avesta has a sense more like "health".

The notion of law is rendered by vrata, religious observance or natural obligation, dharman, ritual support or norm, and dhaman, "divine imposition", divine power, numen. Faith (shraddha) is the "force" which allows the performance of the rites, as kratu is that which animates warriors, vayas or ish is that which emanates from food or drink, and tapas is that which is released by ascetic effort. The divinisation of these ideas is expressed with boundless exaltation in the hymns of the Atharvaveda ; the domestic prayers, in particular the bali, and also the human sacrifice, are full of abstract terms. For the speculations attached to them, see §168 *et seq.*

AGENTS

§ 146. Their names show that certain gods are the performers of specific acts : the case of Savitri has been mentioned. Another is Tvashtri, the "fashioner", the artisan who, of many forms himself, fashions forms, and has made the vajra, and the cup for the soma. This complex figure (according to Ronnow he is an ancient god of procreation later become an Asura) is also the ancestor of the human race. He guards the soma, which Indra comes to drink at his house. In order to take away his cows, Indra (sometimes Trita) kills his son, the three-headed demon Vishvarupa, an ambiguous being who is also chaplain of the gods (Ronnow considers that he is an ancient serpent-god related to a pre-Vedic cult). Irritated by this murder, Tvashtri tries to deny the soma to Indra, but the god seizes the drink by force.

Vishvakarman, "he who makes everything", is a sort of creative spirit, demiurge, a doublet of Prajapati, "master of prosperity". Prajapati assumes a more distinct form in the later parts of the Rigveda (in the earlier parts he is simply an epithet of Savitri), and subsequently becomes still more developed (see §167).

Last must be mentioned some tutelary spirits with limited roles : Vastosh pati, "master of the habitation", Kshetrasya pati, "master of the field", Sita, the "furrow", Urvara, "arable land", and many others of more or less late occurrence.

OTHER DIVINE FORMS

§ 147. Plants are often mentioned, at least under the form of trees and the forest, although it can hardly be said that there was an explicit plant cult. The same may be said of mountains, but Parvata in one hymn takes divine rank.

The instruments of the priest (the stones of the soma press, the pestle and mortar, the post, the strewn grass, the altar, the doors) are objects of adoration ; later this happens also to the weapons of the warrior (arrows, etc.), and of the agriculturist (the plough and the ploughshare).

In regard to theriomorphism in relation to the gods, direct zoolatry is not common : the horses Dadhikra (van), Tarkshya (also as a bird), Paidva, Etasha, and perhaps Dadhyanch, all apparently solar symbols, are accorded ceremonious praise. The adoration of the cow, which is expressed in a hundred forms in the Veda where one of the dominant themes is the "conquest of the cows", has not yet given place to direct invocation. There are no more than traces of the cult of the cow in the ritual (Muusses), and the praise given to it in the Atharvaveda remains confined to that text. The precautionary homage to serpents appears first in the Atharvaveda. It is implied in many myths and may be related to the totemic forms of an aboriginal cult. The sarpabali is an expiatory rite directed against demons ; snakes are chthonic divinities, their queen being identified with the Earth ; and the Satapatha-brahmana knows of a mystical 'science of serpents".

§ 148. There are, however, very few certain indications of totemism. Its existence has been inferred from the names of certain tribes, the occurrence of certain tabus, and the use of the word gotra, cow-shed, to designate the clan.

Except the sun (and the moon), as the symbolic referent of the soma), the stars and the celestial phenomena are not directly worshipped. The phases of the moon, however, attained a certain degree of personification, in Raka, Anumati, Kuhu and Sinivali. Svarbhanu, the demon who devoured the sun, gives place to Rahu from the time of the Chhandogya Upanishad.

THE ANCIENT SACRIFICERS

§ 149. Three great families of priests are prominently connected with the fire cult : the Angiras, the Atharvan and the Bhrigu. They are actually elevated to celestial status : thus Agni is called an Angiras, and Bhrigu is related to Varuna, while in the Brahmanas the Angiras are at feud with the Adityas, and one of the Atharvan, Dadhyanch, instructs the Ashvins in the cult of madhu and foils by a ruse the hostility of Indra. On the other hand these names refer to real sacrificers, and the Avesta has priests named generically athravan. Other sages were deified, such as Atri, and the "Seven Sages" who became a constellation.

As to Manu(s) (cf. the Avestan Manushchithra), it is the name of the first man (the word means "man"), father of the human race : closely connected with the sacrifice, he is the hero of ritual precision and of "faith." Some allusions foreshadow his later role as legislator which made his name celebrated in classical India. Among the legends concerning him the most important is that of the deluge (see § 53). He is called the son of Vivasvant in so far as he is the complement of Yama, having the same relation to the living as Yama has to the dead.

THE DEMONS

§ 150. The world of the demons, or more exactly that of the enemies of the gods, is narrower, less articulated, and the exchange of functions is less pronounced than among the gods. On the other hand the contrast with the heavenly world is not absolute, since new ideas do lead to changes in the roles of individual figures, and ambivalence brings forward now one and now another aspect. In later Vedic, a generic term for demons and lower divinities is bhuta, "beings".

To consider the groups first. The most prominent is that of the Asuras. The word means "master", and in Indo-Iranian designated a class of beings existing side by side with the Devas and fighting them for supremacy. While in Iran the Ahura triumphed, the Daeva being reduced to the level of demons, among some of the Indian clans they were themselves (perhaps because of a struggle between Brahmans and the worshippers of the Asuras ?) cast forth and made demons. In the earlier parts of the Rigveda the propitious aspect of the Asuras is clear : the term is applied to several of the great gods, in particular Varuna. But in the Yajus and the Atharvaveda they are already the constant enemies of the gods. According to the Brahmanas, which dwell interminably on their quarrels, they are, like the gods, sons of Prajapati, but they issued from a less noble part of his body. If they suffered defeat (though not without changes of fortune), it was because they achieved less merit than their adversaries in the matter of sacrifices.

§ 151. They were wielders of maya, and in the magical conception of the Brahmanas this irrational force lowered them to the level of demons. There are allusions to an Asuric cult, which must be that which was introduced into India by the earliest invaders, before the arrival of the Devas : whence the decline of the Adityas, who originally were Asuras. Several names from the demoniac stage have come down to us, but we learn nothing from them, and the correspondences with Iranian names are few. It has sometimes been suggested that the name Asura is connected with that of Assur.

The case of the Pani is quite different. They are an "impious" clan, enemies of the Vedic cult, who steal cows, and from whom Indra and other heroes have to win them back. The Pani have been taken as a historical tribe (see § 243), or alternatively as a personification, with some racial colouring, of "avarice". The Dasa or Dasya can with more certainty be regarded as a racial group. In the language of the hymns the word Dasa, which later came to mean "slave", stands in opposition to Arya. These enemies of the gods whom Indra fought are no doubt aboriginals who confronted the invaders. These two names have Iranian equivalents : Daha, a designation of non-Aryan nomads, and Dahyu, the name of a territory in the sphere of the cult of Vayu. There are finally the Danava, "children of Danu", of whom the best known is Vritra.

§ 152. Other groups are rather enemies of man as such. The Rakshas (the term is ambivalent and means "protection") are demons who walk by night, assume many forms, predominantly animal, eat meat, drink milk, and interfere with the sacrifice. Originally perhaps they were demons of the waters. The Yatu or Yatudhana are similar to them, but are most notorious as sorcerers. The Pishacha are "eaters of raw flesh". The Arati are "the avaricious". The Druh (cf. Avestan drug, "falsehood") are "heresies", and there are others, whose number indeed increases without limit in the later texts. In all these cases they are regarded primarily as enemies. It is possible that the stories preserve traces of real battles ; this has been supposed especially in regard to the Pishachas. But in most cases the mythical element is prominent : they are spirits which possess men, kidnap children, spread disease, who can be driven away by fire or incantation, or by oblations or tricks. The ritual is full of prayers and practices intended to repel evil spirits and to undo their wicked work.

INDIVIDUAL DEMONS

§ 153. These are all grouped round Indra. We have noticed Vritra (see § 122). Others are Arbuda, Shushna, "son of the mist", who personifies drought, Shambara who retreats into his 90, 99 or 100 fortresses, Pipru, the pair Dhuni and Chumuri, Urana, Varchin with his 1,100 or 100,000 warriors, etc. For Vala, Svarbhanu, and Vishvarupa, see § § 123, 146, 148. The most curious of these figures is Namuchi. Indra "churns" his head, which he twists round or snatches off with the foam of the sea. The Ashvins obtained the sura from this head, and in fact Namuchi figures as the initiator of the orgiastic sacrifice of the sura. Another demon whose head is cut off is Makha, who is identified with Vishnu ; according to Ronnow he is the image of the human sacrificial victim.

COSMOLOGY

§ 154. The universe is divided into three parts, each sometimes duplicated and even tripled. They are the earth, the "intermediate space", antariksha, and the sky, the vault of which separates the visible world form the invisible "third sky", where Indra and the Fathers live.

The earth is a disc resting on the ocean (the Brahmanas say that originally it floated, and was later fixed by the "regions", dish). Space is conceived in fact as like an ocean, divided into two, three or four seas. The sun is surrounded by water, the "seven rivers" of Vedic geography are transferred to the sky, and the clouds on the other hand are assimilated to mountains. There is a standing confusion between terrestrial and aerial phenomena, and this has had repercussions on mythology. The sky and the earth, or more vaguely rochana and rajas, the luminous and dark domains, form two masses which balance each other, "cups" which face each other, later to become "halves of the egg". Distances are quoted, but the figures vary. Four regions are reckoned, sometimes five (including the centre), six (including the zenith), and even seven. Mount Meru is met with only from the time of the Taittiriya Aranyaka, but it is foreshadowed, perhaps, by the image of the cosmic axle, which appears in various forms (skambha, aja ekapad, the ritual post).

As for the sun, the common Vedic conception is that it has a bright and a dark face : the former faces the earth by day, while by night the "wheel" turns and traverses in the opposite direction the path taken by day (Sieg). According to Benda the sun then goes back into the earth, the power of darkness, while it reappears in the stars, especially in the "seven constellations", which are only projections of the hidden source of light. The sky is imagined as a stone in which holes have been pierced for the stars and doors for the sun and moon (Hertel).

§ 155. The phases of the moon, the "fifteen" (parvan, "joints") play an important part in the liturgy, and an important ceremony is based on this division. At the time of the new moon, that body enters into the sun, from which it borrows its light, as appears already to have been realised. There is no clear mention of any of the planets before the late texts of the Vaikhanasa. The nakshatra or lunar mansions ("rulers of the night") appear perhaps in the most recent parts of the Rigveda with the number 27 or 28, and their connection with the moon is assimilated to a marriage. Their individual names are found in the Yajurveda, and some in the Rik, though with some variation from common usage. The list begins with the Krittika (Pleiades), and later with the Ashvini (Aries). Modern scholars have made elaborate attempts both to use the nakshatras for dating certain texts, and to compare the system with the Chinese Sieou and the Babylonian Zodiac (Biot, Jacobi, Oldenberg, etc.). The Pole Star, Dhruva ("the fixed"), is referred to by name in the domestic ritual, the Great Bear may be alluded to in the Rigveda and it is possible that other astronomical phenomena are hidden behind mythical forms.

COSMOGONY

§ 156. The opinions expressed about the origin of the world are wanting in system, and each author seems to have followed his own fancy. We shall deal with the statements on this topic when we give an account of speculations (see § 164 *et seq.*).

Here we need only say that creation is an emanation, a projection (srij-), or a foundation (dha-). It is also an act, the work of an artisan or artist (ma-, "measure", and taksh-, "to fabricate"), in particular of the carpenter, smith or weaver : the world is "stretched" as the sacrifice is stretched (tan-) on the ritual loom, and further, as cause or outcome of the image, creation is a sacrifice, of which the most elaborate account appears in the Purusha Sukta (see § 164). Again, it is a magical achievement, produced by the sacred word or the ecstatic state of mind. The worlds are said to be held in subjection by supports, bolts or ropes ; the post (skambha) in the Atharvaveda is a creative force, personal and impersonal at the same time.

§ 157. The creation is a procreation, spoken of in biological terms. But the relationships mentioned are reversible : the gods produce their parents (thus they engendered Agni, who is their father), and no genealogy is permanent. The father is that which comes before, or is the space in which a thing is situated, or is the chief of a group, or again is an abstract concept : thus Agni is the "son of force".

As for man, he is generally considered to have issued from a "first man", Manu (see §149) or Yama ; Yama pairing with

Yami (see §15) produced human beings, and his refusal to commit incest, narrated in the Rigveda, is a moralistic departure which is not pursued. More generally the human race is regarded as of divine origin, descending from beings who were themselves divine. Man does not enjoy a privileged place among the original products of creation, and yet the idea is to be discerned, implicit in what is said, that man is the ultimate purpose of the creative process (Scharbau).

ESCHATOLOGY : THE SOUL

§ 158. As early as in the hymns a distinction, vague though it be, is made between the body and an invisible principle which is denoted by the words asu, "vital force", the essence at the basis of the breath (of bodily and impersonal origin – Arbman), and manas, "spirit", the non-bodily seat of thought and the internal senses, located in the heart. There is no reference in the hymns to a "soul" in the true sense (Jacobi, Tuxen). The word atman does not attain to its proper meaning till the period of the Upanishads, where it is stated that the soul (purusha) is of the size of a thumb.

The nature of the Vedic soul is shown by the treatment of death : the preta (human after death) is merely a shadowy double of the living man, like the Homeric psyche (Arbman) ; it is the personality itself, the essence of the dead man, which survives (Glasenapp). Survival is taken as a matter of course. All the images of the future life are bodily ; the nearest approach to a different view is the statement in the Atharvaveda that cremation produces a new body which is "refreshed" and exempt from imperfections.

§ 159. On the other hand, the later parts of the Rigveda say that after death the elements of the individual pass into the sun, the wind, the waters and the plants. It has been supposed that this is the origin of the theory of reincarnation (see §176), but it would derive more directly from some passages in the Satapathabrahmana which state that those who do not perform the rites correctly are reborn after death and become "ever again food for death", that the "immortality" acquired through the rites is of limited duration, and that cremation leads to a new birth. Other Brahmanas add to these the ideas that the father is reborn in the son, that after this life there are three deaths and three births (through diksha, etc., Jaiminiya Upanishadbrahmana), and that the dead man who has attained the sun or the moon can return here below at his pleasure (ibid) (Glasenapp).

It must be added that the Indian Vedic times had no desire for the beyond. He feared death, he prayed for "the full period of life" (a hundred years), he regarded death as evil and life as in its proper nature happy.

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HEAVEN AND HELL

§ 160. After death man went by "the path which the Fathers had taken" and reached heaven, where he was awaited by pleasures, conceived in the most materialistic manner, of idleness and sensuality. This is the devayana, the "path (which leads to the) gods," the fate destined for those who have practised asceticism, performed the sacrifices and given gifts and have cultivated rita (and as would be added later, read the Veda) ; heaven is the world of pious works (sukritasya loka). These are the views set forth at least in part of the Rigveda, though in the Upanishads this paradise is depreciated as a place of merely transitory existence, fit for those destined to be reborn (see §176). But the predominant conception in the Veda (Arbman, elaborating Oldenberg), in agreement with the Iranian ideas, is that of an abode of the dead not in heaven but under the earth, a place of shades without joy, over whom reigns Yama, the place to which leads the "path towards the fathers", pitriyana. The ritual corroborates the importance of the doctrine.

§ 161. As for hell, which was reserved for enemies, the impious and the avaricious, who were all objects of the same reprobation, the idea seems to have arisen gradually from that of the abode of the dead : it is the abode of the dead regarded as the counterpart of paradise. It was first imagined vaguely as a pit or cavern : the demonology of the Atharvaveda gave it a more precise form and a name. The Satapathabrahmana describes the tortures and knows the principle of the allotment of rewards and punishments according to deeds. There are still however two different views : it is said that a man passes at death between two fires, which burn the wicked and spare the good, who then go to the sun (Satapatha), and on the other hand that from the smoke of the funeral pyre the dead man passes from elements to elements until he reaches the "seasons", which lead him to the celestial world (Jaiminiya).

Nothing more definite is said on the judgement of the dead, or the duration of punishment, nor on man's ultimate fate or the end of the world.

THE FATHERS

§ 162. The term fathers (pitri) in the Veda designates the first ancestors, the founders of the human race, who gave their names to the Brahman families. But more generally it means the totality of the dead, so far as they have been cremated or buried in accordance with the rites. They are immortal and are treated as the equals of the gods and participate in the exploits of the gods. Worshippers pray for their favour, and offer them the oblation which is their food, the svadha as opposed to the svaha, the celestial oblation. But this is the outcome of a divinisation which is characteristic of only a part of the Veda. In fact the Fathers are also distinguished from the gods, and in the Brahmanas are sometimes their antitheses, indeed their enemies. The "path of the Fathers", as we have seen, becomes a counterpart to the "way of the gods", as does the "world of the Fathers" to the "world of the gods". In the Satapathabrahmana they are located in the "intermediate celestial regions"; they may be identified with the seasons, or they may be made guardians of the home, like the Roman Lares and Penates.

YAMA

§ 163. From the mythological point of view, the conceptions of the life after death are dominated, at least in the hymns, by the figure of Yama. The original conception is that of the "first man" (and first sacrificer), who with his sister Yami (see § 15) is the progenitor of the human race; in the same way the Iranian Yima was a first man and first king, and the word yama means "twin". He subsequently became the king of the dead, Death personified, the ruler of the subterranean world. Arbman, however, thinks that the sequence of ideas was in the opposite direction.

These are the common Vedic conceptions, but even in the Rigveda they tend to be replaced by a different conception, more in harmony with the description "luminous" which is also applied to him there. Yama is now the king of paradise, assimilated to the gods if not himself one of them (he is called "king"). The soma is pressed for him; his father Vivasvant is a luminous spirit (see § 131), and he bears the patronymic Vaivasvata. He has as messengers two dogs, who guard the path of the dead; Greek analogies to them have been pointed out (Bloomfield).

While Hillebrandt regards Yama as an ancient lunar divinity, Guntert favours the idea of a primitive androgyne figure, divided into two in the Yama-Yami myth, and in the formation of which this author associates the figure of the sacrificed man.

Another figure representing death is Nirriti, "annihilation", a sinister goddess whose ceremonies are distinguished by the use of the colour black. Dice, women, sleep, sicknesses and all nuisances were dedicated to her. It is probable that, in imitation of Yama, she was conceived as queen of the dead.

3. SPECULATIONS

IN THE HYMNS

§ 164. No doctrinal system is formulated or even implied in the hymns. But even from the earliest fragments a tendency can be noticed to relate the multiplicity of phenomena and the plurality of the gods by a unitive principle. In its barest form it is a neuter pronoun, eka, "the one", or tad, "that". This is in itself an outline of the speculation on the origin of the world, the theme about which all the Vedic speculation revolved. The problem was first broached as an implication of the ritual, in order to show the correlation between the system of the sacrifice and the outer world. Thus hymn 10.90 describes the creation as the result of a sacrifice, as the members, organs and functions of a giant who after the original sacrifice was dismembered by the gods and the sages. This theme of the primeval Man was known to many Asian civilisations, and may have been adopted secondarily by the Indo-Europeans. There are indications of the idea in Iran, whence it may have passed into Orphism (Frenkian). From the religious point of view, Dumezil thinks that this myth transfers to heaven the notion of the sacrificed brahman. From the philosophical point of view, it may be said to foreshadow the development of an organic conception of the cosmos. The two hymns to Vishvakarman (X. 81, 82) show how the primordial divinity offered the world in sacrifice, realising his creative purpose ritually, and how the sages aided him. Even the more direct expositions of cosmogony, like X. 129 or 121, introduce asceticism and the sacrifice among the original factors of creation.

§ 165. From the beginning this ritual theme is accompanied by the idea of the sacred word. The oral act is a force in itself, sometimes unnamed, sometimes designated by a hundred names with various shades of meaning. It is an aspect of rita (see § 145), the vach, more often the brahman, one of the important terms of Indian thought : a sacred formula, of a mystical or esoteric type, which opens the world of the gods and puts a flow of force at the disposal of the Brahmana, that is to say the "possessor of brahman". This notion of the (oral) sacred takes on a mythical character when it assumes the traits of Brihasparti (see § 137) otherwise known as Brahmanaspati. If we accept the possible connection with the Avestan term baresman, the name of the bunch of leaves which are strewn for ritual purposes, we can follow Charpentier in assuming that the starting-point is in plant magic, and therfore in "magic" in general, without necessarily admitting, however, that this idea can be traced in the hymns. After that stage the idea would undergo a bifurcation, into the "sacred word" and (from the Atharvaveda) the "cosmic absolute" (see § 173). Other authors, such as Oldenberg, make the simpler suggestion of a sequence, from "magical force" to "sacred word" to "absolute". Hertel stresses the primary sense of "fire of heaven". As opposed to this neuter word, the masculine brahman designates the "sacred" located in a man who performs the magico-religious function, and this "sacred" can therefore be magnified eventually into a god, Brahman, the descendant of Brihaspati (see § 167).

§ 166. Without ceasing to be religious, cosmogonic speculation tended to leave behind the ideas of ritual magic and to conceive the world as emanating from a primordial agent, which was either the Sun, especially under the name Rohita (see § 131), or Hiranyagarbha, the "golden embryo", symbol of universal life, the Breath, the Waters, or above all Time, kala. This agent is represented in the Atharvaveda by a privileged type of persons, the Vratya (see § 210), the brahmacharin or "probationary Brahman", and even by a verse metre, the viraj, regarded as the food and substance of the world, and later as the mother of Brahman (the winning throw of the dice ?—Mauss).

Hymn X. 129 of the Rigveda (see § 12), starting from a state when there was neither existence nor non-existence, says that there come into being successively a unique element produced by internal heat (tapas), then desire (of a sexual tendency), "the first seed of thought", and then the gods. After this the poet declares that he is unable to tell whether that One is identical with the supreme god of the created world, since the gods have no knowledge of ultimate origins, being themselves of the order of creation. In this famous poem Indian speculation reaches its highest point right at the start.

In many other passages doubt is to be noticed, bearing especially on the existence of the gods. Hence the question, "what is this god, whom we serve with our oblation ?" (X. 121), a question to which the final verse, added later, supplies a reassuring answer. In the Atharvaveda (X. 2 and XI. 8) a long series of questions are asked concerning god the creator : they describe the structure of the human body, the operation of the senses, the formation of ideas, and conclude with an exaltation of the absolute. Many puzzles emphasise the extent of this metaphysical disquiet, such as those which are gathered together to form the hymn to the yupa (Ath. V. X. 8), which in a succession of images condense monotheistic and pantheistic ideas simultaneously, in a way which foreshadows the Shvetashvatara Upanishad (Hauer).

THE BRAHMANAS

§ 167. In the Brahmanas the ancient ideas are presented in a more organised way. The creative principle is now concentrated in Prajapati, a product of learned speculation which covers quite primitive ideas. This "lord of the creatures", sometimes referred to anonymously as Ka, "Who ?", is assimilated in the later Brahmanas to Brahman. His role is completed in the act of creation, after which he is emptied of his substance. This act is in general represented, as in hymn X. 129, by an act of procreation : the story is told that, moved by desire and fearing solitude, he exercises "heat", tapas, and doubles himself, or mates with a female entity who emanates from him, who is sometimes Vach, "the word", and sometimes Ushas, "the dawn", his own daughter. According to Guntert the point of departure of this myth must be an androgynous being. From the initial creative act emerge all things, beings, substances, organs, through a series of transformations. The original substance is usually the waters, sometimes existing independently of Prajapati, sometimes forming the transition between non-being and the god ; sometimes it is the cosmic Egg which brings about this transition, unless, as the image of the cosmos, it breaks its shell and produces the being itself. It is again the characteristics of Prajapati which are shown in the boar who raises the submerged earth out of the sea, an image very different from the classical avatara.

As creator Prajapati is identified with the world, and is assimilated to the year, and more especially to the sacrifice : he is the god Sacrifice. The "doctrine of sacrifice" (S. Levi) assumes a force of magical origin which compels the gods, but also assures them the effect for which it was put into action, while on the other hand it gives the sacrificer a means of raising himself to the divine level and realising a condition in which he will no longer have to die (amrita). The sacrifice is thus a cosmic operation, a process for the total transformation of the world.

§ 168. The rites produce their effects by their own force, which resides in the mysterious connections subsisting between the ritual process and the cosmic order. It is the purpose of the Brahmanas to make clear these connections (nidana). The idea is already to be found in the hymns that religion establishes and maintains the unity of the world by the circulation of gifts, the exchange of human offerings and divine favours. The sacrifice created the world, and its correct performance regulates the progress of the world.

The domain of the sacred is the opposite of that of the profane. In passing from the profane world to the sacred, objects acquire symbolic values. The sacrificer leaves his body, "makes the journey to heaven" and inverts the relations in which he stands. He is himself the object sacrificed ; the offering is substituted for him, either in the sense that it goes to the gods to prepare his way to heaven, or in the sense that with it the sacrificer's body is mystically consumed and becomes a new body fit to serve him in heaven (Mus). In another aspect the sacrifice is a mystical union in which the sacrificer engenders in the altar (vedi, feminine in Sanskrit) his future self. Finally the conception is also to be met with that through the sacrifice man ransoms his being from the gods.

§ 169. This series of speculations reaches its culminating point in the doctrines concerning the Agnichayana (see § 217). According to Eggeling (supported by Keith and Mus, controverted by Oldenberg), the starting-point is the theme of the sacrificed man (see § 165), and the present sacrifice which repeats this archetypal act consists in immolating Prajapati, who is identified with the sacrificer. The dismembered Prajapati is restored to life and reconstructed in the form of the altar, which reproduces architecturally the creation of the cosmos, and is thus an outward projection of ritual thought. The same symbolism is to be seen in other sacrificial acts, such as the revival of the god, and the reconstruction of the cosmos.

The gods also sacrifice : in fact they were originally mortals, and acquired immortality through the sacrifice. This partly accounts for their decadence in the Brahmana period, their lack of life : the sacrifice acts upon them as upon a passive object, and absorbs them.

Thus what is fundamental is to know the rites (the Veda, let it be recalled, is "knowledge"), and to have faith (shraddha), that is to "trust" the efficacity of the rite. The act (karman) sums up the whole of religion, and the old word rita, departing from its original sense, and coupled with satya, "truth", comes like satya to mean "exactitude" (S. Levi). Error is the great fault. There exist, outside the bounds of common experience, certain formulae which lay down the details of this or that rite : they constitute the theme of a mystery, access to which is reserved, in the magical stock phrase of the Brahmanas, to "him who thus knows".

§ 170. At this stage things are ready for the transition from the ritual plane to the metaphysical plane. Actually, however, this transition takes place by another route, through the doctrine of the brahman. The notion of brahman (see § 165) first appears as part of the creative activity of Prajapati, then takes its place beside god, and finally rises to the level of a universal principle, the "name and form" of things (Deussen).

Theories of the breath as spirit reveal themselves here and there in the hymns, sometimes under the material form of prana, "respiration" and sometimes under the mythical form of Vayu. A word sums up this rudimentary physiology : atman, which at first in a somewhat variable way designated "the breath" (with "the wind" as cosmic correlate) as the life principle, and then came to mean the "self" (as opposed to the non-self) with its bodily or psychic support. It was the "inexpressible breath" and the sum of the forces of the individual. The way was prepared for the coupling of the atman and the brahman by the magnification of the brahman found in a passage of the Satapatha-brahmana (X. 3, 5) which is attached (by chance ?) to the Agnichayana (cf. also XI. 2, 3)

§ 171. The prevailing system of ideas in the Brahmanas is that of substances and forces, and is largely inherited from the hymns. No more than in the period of the hymns is there any distinction between substance and quality, substratum and force, animate and inanimate. Cosmic powers, elements of the personality, factors of life, spiritual capacities, acts, profane and religious values, etc., stand in various relations to each other : now one is an integral part of another, enters into it or emerges from it, is its cause or effect, and now the two come together to create a new essence and sometimes there is a trace of the idea of evolution (parinama) (Glasenapp). These entities are in no sense abstractions, but realities, collective unities : men saw forms, and thought in terms of functions.

By raising the potential of life, the rite had effect upon the life after death. The life after death was not eternal in itself : its duration depended on one's works, and if these works were insufficient, one ran the risk of a second death, punarmrityu. How could one escape it ? By the sacrifice and by (esoteric) knowledge. Thus these ideas gave the first impetus to the notion of a rebirth, which was later to dominate Indian eschatology.

THE EARLY UPANISHADS : COSMOGONY AND PHYSIOLOGY

§ 172. The myths of creation are repeated, without profound change. The image of the cosmic tree appears (Katha Upanishad). The Creator is Death (= Hunger), who supports the world in order to eat it (Brihadaranyakopanishad). The unique Being (originally tapas ?) develops successively three elements, fire, water and food, corresponding to the three worlds, sky, atmosphere, earth, and to the three colours, red, white, black. Penetrating these and combining them, it creates the multiplicity of beings (Chhandogya Upanishad). A sketch of a doctrine of evolution accounts for the genesis of the beings and the essences. Most of these theories make use of the conception of brahman, the role of Prajapati being assumed henceforth by the atman (Brihadaranyakopanishad). New motives are adduced for the desire to create : it is in order to have an object to know that the brahman "became two" (Maitri Upanishad). The cosmogonic theme is no more than an outline.

The physiological doctrine is elaborated in parallel with the cosmological : the breaths (prana), organic forces numbering five, which animate the body, are identical with cosmic forces, and the prana in the singular, which comprehends them all, is superior to the senses : in the parable on the rivalry among the organs, it is the breath which is victorious. The prana is the vitalistic aspect of the atman, and like the atman can be transferred to the absolute plane (Kaushitaki Upanishad). To the five breaths correspond the five organs (sight, hearing, speech, thought and touch), by the medium of which the "five channels of the heart" lead to the brahman. The link with the cosmos is provided by the regents of the five series, sun, moon, fire, rain and wind, and their correlated elements, the sky, the directions, the earth, the lightning and space (Chhandogya). A system of preestablished affinities obtains between the parts of the body and the elements of the macrocosm (Brihadaranyaka). The five breaths, we are told, result from the dismemberment of Prajapati (Maitri).

All this theory serves as foundation for the theory of the atman. The ground was prepared for it by the mythical role of Vayu in the Rigveda, it was sketched in the Atharvaveda, and built up in the Brahmaṇas. It is a question, however, whether the theory began in reflection on the body or in reflection on the world. Filliozat thinks that the physiological doctrine was founded on the cosmological, whereas Mus holds that there must have been an earlier stage in which, as in the myth of Puṛusha, the world was identified with the body.

THE BRAHMAN AND THE ATMAN

§173. The problem of the brahman now becomes the central point of speculation. Emerging from its ritual shell, thought proceeds to its great achievement. It can be summed up very briefly : the brahman is the universe, and the atman, the individual soul, is nothing other than the brahman, the universal soul, and after death it is reintegrated with it. But this is an eternal identity, the knowledge of it is for each individual a spiritual conquest to be achieved : to become brahman is the supreme purpose. The prize of success is deliverance, moksha. The doctrine of the Upanishads is put forward as a doctrine of salvation.

Such is the outcome of that quest for unity which all the Vedic speculation unconsciously pursues. The brahman, being in itself, the absolute, free from all contigency, neither object nor subject, inscrutable, indefinable [all that can be said of it is "it is not (thus or thus)"], is the essence of things, "the reality of reality", knowledge and blessing. It is the source of all that exists, and the plurality of phenomena proceed from it by an evolution of the cosmogonic type.

In contrast, the atman is an evident reality. It is first of all a vital force superposed upon the senses, which after death returns to the element whence it came. Then it is the "internal ruler" which is found in all beings and even in nature, at once minute and incommensurable. It is an entity apart, not a function of the body, but the organs of the body (the five senses and the internal sense) are at its service. Under the name purusha, "individual", it sits in the heart or in the pupil of the eye, corresponding to the cosmic purusha which sits in the sun.

It is from the theory of the three states of the soul (Brihadaranyaka) that its nature is best understood : the atman plays its normal part during the waking life ; during dreams it wanders away from the body, and the forms which it creates foreshadow the joys of paradise ; and during deep sleep (sushupti) it becomes pure spirit, without consciousness or suffering, retaining all its faculties in a potential state without using them.

§ 174. The identity of the brahman and the atman (the outcome of old animistic ideas, also perhaps an abstract formulation of the myth of Prajapati) is a sort of dogma. The famous monistic formula *tat tvam asi*, "thou art that", (Chhandogya), expresses the idea, which is illustrated by the parallel of the salt which dissolves in water and disappears, but through its influence the whole body of water becomes salt. But this knowledge is not imparted to all ; one must turn within oneself, abandon the physical ego, then the affective ego, and finally attain to a disindividualised ego, and therefore to a state of unconsciousness.

Does anything other than the atman-brahman exist ? If the majority of texts imply the reality of the external world, some of them (Kaushitaki) by implication deny it, thus anticipating the non-dualistic forms of the Vedanta. The question is in a sense empty : the brahman is the whole of reality, and the existence of the world is only a secondary aspect of it. The idea of a unity standing for the multiplicity of things and reabsorbing them into itself was suggested by the numerical symbolism of the hymns (one substitued for many) and by some passages of the Brahmanas which, for example, identify death as an abstraction with the deaths of a plurality of individuals.

DELIVERANCE

§ 175. The theory of deliverance (moksha, mukti) is the culmination of the atman in the brahman. It can be defined as the integration of the atman in the brahman. But how is it achieved ? While in the Brahmanas to be delivered from death depends on works as well as on knowledge, the Upanishads tend to lessen the importance of works and to exalt knowledge. Rites and gifts are an inferior way. Asceticism has a certain efficacy, but it is by way of means. Knowledge alone assures salvation. Knowledge is acquired by an intuition, to which contribute the disciplines which were later systematised under the name of Yoga. In the early Upanishads traces are to be noticed of an ecstatic process (in the Brihadaranyaka, the manifestations of the purusha ; in the Brihadaranyaka and the Kaushitaki, the regulation of the breath) which probably derives from the theory of sushupti (Heimann).

He who has attained deliverance attains supreme bliss : having passed beyond desire and suffering, he merges into the brahman, losing, as in sleep, his individual consciousness. Some texts, however, allow it to be guessed that this sort of loss of identity met with some opposition. It follows also that deliverance may be attained during this life : the "delivered during life" (as he was called later) is a being who has renounced everything, has passed beyond good and evil, to whom death brings no more than a modification of no importance.

REBIRTH

§ 176. Deliverance is the lot of privileged beings ; a bitter future opens before the mass of human kind. Man is destined to unhappiness, and his atman, while it remains individual, becomes the "enjoyer". Thus arises a pessimistic conception of man's fate, of which the most dramatic evidence is that of the Maitri Upanishad.

This state of suffering is terrible most of all because of the danger that it may last indefinitely. The creatures are in fact condemned to be reborn. The doctrine of rebirth or samsara, "circuit, circular or total migration", (the word does not appear before the Katha Upanishad), is fully formulated in the earliest Upanishads. We have noticed some passages of the Satapathabrahmana in which it seems to be outlined (the Jaiminiya Upanishadbrahmana also teaches a possible rebirth, but at the will of the subject). Everything leads us to suppose that it arose as a result of prolonged reflection, which must have taken into account the cyclical relations between life and nature, the return of the sacrificer to earth (a known ritual theme), the legal-magical handing on from father to son (sampradana), not to emphasise the general ideas of animism, and the tendency to identification, to metamorphosis, and to hylozoism.

§ 177. The doctrine did not attain acceptance, however, without the influence of its ethical element : reward and punishment for merit and sin. The same word, karman, which meant "ritual act" now receives the meaning of moral act and of the result of action. The teaching on this subject appears in its clearest form in the mouth of Yajnavalkya (Brihadaranyaka), who may have been its originator : man suffers dissolution at death, but his karman is the cause of a new birth which inherits the good or bad deeds of the former life. This doctorine, which in the Brihadaranyaka itself is taught as opposed to the old doctrine of resurrection, gives place to a compromise in the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka : the theory of the five fires. Once the body is burnt, the soul returns to earth through the stages of a quintuple sacrifice, an evidently mythical idea partly disguised under a ritual formulation. Again, it is taught that there are two paths (ibid.), the "path of the gods" (see § 160), which through the divisions of time and the astral bodies leads to the brahman and assures deliverance ; and the "path of the fathers" which leads to a return to earth. Good conduct causes a man to be reborn in one of the superior castes, and evil couduct leads to rebirth in an impure caste or among the animals, and a third and even worse fate is provided. The Kaushitaki says that all the dead are first brought together in the moon, where they are sorted out. All this exemplifies what R. Berthelot has called astrobiology.

THE LATER UPANISHADS : THE BRAHMAN

§ 178. In the later Upanishads, if the identification of the atman and the brahman is still the basic doctrine, the problem has shifted and in contrast to the purism of the earlier Upanishads it is possible to speak of heretical movements (Hauer). The mythical and ritualistic elements in the teaching become less important.

Matter tends to be regarded as an autonomous principle. Certain texts (Maitri) further divide the atman-brahman into matter, the individual soul, the universal soul, and the supreme soul. What is needed is to grasp the unity of all these aspects. The soul is bound to the material elements of the body, and the psychic functions depend on them. The spirit, purusha, is a sort of luminous but inactive regent. Psychology becomes emancipated from the theory of the breaths. In addition to the three states of the soul (see § 173), the Maitri expounds a fourth, which is designated only by the ordinal number (turiya) : to be liberated from the atman (niratman).

Finally the concept of maya appears, an old term of which we have noticed the earlier uses (see § 116). Maya is not yet, as it becomes in the Vedanta, the illusion which leads to belief in the reality of the sensible world ; the reality of the world is not doubted, and Gaudapada, who denies it, daparts from the doctrine of the Upanishad on which he is commenting. Maya is a force which holds the soul captive, in the same way as matter does (Shvetashvatara Upanishad) ; it consists in the fact that the soul is mistaken about its own nature and tastes the "sweet deception" of the external world instead of realising its absolute nature.

The aim of life remains salvation : the liberation of the soul, either as an isolated entity, or by its absorption into the brahman. The means of its attainment are various, but the chief of these is "(divine) grace", prasada.

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THEISM

§ 179. This grace, which is not granted to all ("he whom the atman has elected, he alone can seize it"—Kathopanishad), presupposes a theism of the same type as that which later developed the mediaeval mysticism of bhakti. But it remains vague and unstable. In the Shvetashvatara the notion of god is sometimes equated with the brahman (the god who rotates the wheel of brahman), and sometimes it becomes part of the system, forming with the universe and the soul the "triple brahman". The notion of god remains in any case of the mythical order, and the god is called Rudra (Shiva). In the Maitri Upanishad the development of this mythical element towards what we are familiar with as Hinduism is marked and approaches the stage reached in the epics (Strauss).

THE SAMKHYA

§ 180. The original contribution of the later Upanishads is the ideas of the Samkhya ; this is their first appearance, for the Dharmasutra of the Vaikhanasas, in which they are found, is certainly later. It is not easy to determine whether the occurrence of these ideas implies that the system had already been worked out (Garbe), or we have to admit a merely rudimentary pre-Samkya system (Jacobi). It is in any case clear that the ideas are developed in accordance with the classical Samkhya (Johnston).

The assumption of a relatively autonomous matter is already a step towards dualism. In order to explain the relation between matter and the brahman, an evolutionary series is imagined corresponding to material, psychic and transcendent factors : the Katha enumerates the organs of sense, the manas, the buddhi, the mahan atma, the avyakta, and finally the purusha. The Shvetashvatara first uses the term pradhana to signify matter, which is described by the parable of the she-goat : matter is the she-goat (or the unborn), the products of evolution are her kids, the soul linked to matter is the he-goat which couples with the she-goat, and the liberated soul is "the other". The three colours of the she-goat, or in other words the three primordial elements, are the guna. This is the first appearance of this famous term, the true sense of which seems to have been "part constitutive of a whole", (or more concretely "thread of a twisted rope" ?). But a passage in the Chhandogya (see § 172) presupposes it, and Senart thinks that it is part of an ancient naturalistic system of ideas.

§ 181. In the Maitri the terminology becomes more precise. It is asked how the spirit can unite with matter, and a distinction is drawn between the spirit situated in the body and the absolute spirit, the one being inferior, active, subject to modifications, the "elementary atman", and the other superior, the cause of action but untouched by the effects of action. The spirit dwells in matter ; the spirit is the "eater", and matter is the "food". The 25 tattva, "principles", are mentioned, in a somewhat unusual order ; and the guna have acquired their permanent form, with their psychological and cosmic overtones. Finally, in contrast to the classical Samkhya, the Samkhya of the Upanishads shows a theistic tendency.

THE YOGA

§ 182. The Yoga, on the other hand, shows no trace of ideas of divinity. It is a technique, superimposed on other techniques, intended to realise on the one hand the stages of the Samkhya, and on the other the attainment of the brahman, a double achievement which necessitates an internal experience : to learn to merge oneself in the brahman, while freeing one's thought of all other content. The term appears for the first time in the Katha, and the primary sense is "yoke" or "equipment" : the Yoga is described as resembling a chariot in which the atman sits, the driver is reason, and the chariot itself is the body. The parable means that mastery of the body is acquired by control of the senses under the direction of the manas. Knowledge of the factors enumerated by the Samkhya serves to dissociate the personality so as to free the ego from the non-ego, the soul from matter. He who is "yoked", yukta, attains to deliverance.

The method is developed in the Shvetashvatara, which uses the term dhyana, "meditation", and emphasises the connection between breathing and thought. After experiencing the initial ecstatic effects, the yogin achieves definite results, concentration of the mind and the elimination of external obstacles.

The Maitri Upanishad enumerates "six limbs" of Yoga and alludes to physical practices similar to those described much later by the Hathayoga. The physiology of the veins, already referred to in the earlier Upanishads, is applied to the purposes of Yoga. Finally the text exalts meditation on the syllable Om, which as far back as the later Brahmanas and the Aranyakas has been regared as the essence of the sacrifice, the summing up of the Veda, and the equivalent of the brahman, and henceforth forms part of the practices of Yoga.

CONCLUSIONS

§ 183. Although the doctrine of the upanishads claims to be a continuation of the old exegesis of the Veda, in fact, in some respects, it constitutes a break with that tradition. It abandons ritual for mysticism, and a religion of happiness for a philosophy of salvation : "he who knows thus" has no more need of rites or of cult. It is a protestant doctrine. The question may then be asked whether it arose in the same social milieux as those which gave birth to the Vedic literature proper. Some indications have led to the suggestion of a secular influence (Garbe).

It is also suggested that the novel element may be traced to a source external to the Aryan culture. Some have proposed a non-Aryan origin for samsara (La Vallee Poussin). While the question of a relation with the Greek metempsychosis has been raised, and has sometimes been answered by the hypothesis of a borrowing by India (in the absence of any clear dates, it has been more usual to think in terms of a borrowing by Greece, as Schroeder), nowadays opinion inclines to favour the idea of a parallel elaboration (Keith), starting from a common substratum or borrowing which, however, is of a quite indeterminable character. There is a general resemblance, and some detailed coincidences, but the Pythagorean spirit differs from that of the Upanishads : in the Greek system liberation is attained through ascetic practices which derive from an ancient expiatory symbolism, and rebirth is associated with the memory of former lives, a feature which in India appears only later.

§ 184. It does not seem likely that Greek thought directly influenced Vedic India, even in the late period of the Upanishads. At most Iranian influences may have been felt in both Greece and India. The doctrine of atman-brahman appears in a fragmentary form in Iran, whether by heritage or borrowing, and it may have passed therefrom into the Greek hermetism and gnosticism, and thence to Plotinus. Brehier, however, supposes a direct influence of the Upanishads on the thought of Plotinus.

On the other hand parallels have been drawn between the number doctrine of the Samkhya and that of Pythagoreanism ; and the seven macrocosmic forces (and the seven microcosmic functions) of the Chhandogya Upanishad have been compared to the Iranian doctrine of seven forces (Przyluski). The same author, finally, suggests an Iranian origin for the guna : the triad of the pure light, atmospheric (?) light, and darkness, in the Magian religion corresponds to the cosmic aspect of the guna, while their elementary aspect corresponds to the triad of sky, water and fire of the Semitic world.

4. RITUAL

THE RITUAL OF THE RIGVEDA

§ 185. The ritual elaborated by generations of members of the priestly families, and described, with some variations of detail as between schools and masters, in the Sutras, was not authoritative in any absolute manner throughout the Vedic era. It included elements from divergent traditions, and the texts mention forbidden rites. No doubt there is general agreement between the Sutras on the one hand and the Brahmanas and even the Yajurveda on the other. But the ritual of the Rigvedic period, as it can be inferred from the hymns, must have been appreciably different from the ritual of the Sutras : all the indications are that the extreme complications of the schools accumulated little by little. The Rigveda fails to provide information on many relevant points, and contains many terms which are not found in the Sutras or have different meanings there, such as the names of some of the receptacles for the soma, and the names of some officiants : there were divergencies in the technique of the soma. It has been shown that the parts played by the brahman and by the purohita in the hymns do not correspond to what is taught in the instructions for the ritual (Oldenberg). On the other hand Bergaigne showed that a whole series of hymns are adapted for ritual purposes, and following this clue Hillebrandt went so far as to speak of a "sacrificial recension" of the Rigveda. According to Hertel the Apri hymns were intended for a new year sacrifice connected with the winter solstice.

As to the Indo-Iranian coincidences, they are confined to some identical names and some details concerning the soma.

THE SACRIFICE

§ 186. The religious act *par excellence* is the sacrifice (yajna ; homa designates the oblation in the fire). It is an act of homage to the divinities of the cult, deprecatory in the cases of Nirriti and of the Rakshas, consisting of a gift, an oblation, havis, made in order to obtain certain benefits, prosperity, health, long life, abundance of cattle, male offspring, and in the nitya rites, ever more detailed demands. But this broad definition does not adequately represent the true nature of the Vedic sacrifice. While certain authors (Keith) maintain the view of the sacrifice as gift, the interpretation of Hubert and Mauss finds solid support in the Brahmanas themselves : that the sacrifice is a consecration, a movement form the profane to sacred, which modifies not only the "victim" but the moral personality who pays for the ceremony, and even possibly external objects. The victim effects the communication between the profane and the sacred, while the priest is both the agent of the sacrificer and the delegate of the gods.

The greater number of the Vedic sacrifices are supplications, never thank-offerings. The distinction between sacrifice and magical act is slight. While it would be wrong to ascribe to the original sacrifice the speculations which the Brahmanas develop or imply (see § 168), it is clear that magical idea predominated, and that deprecations and expiations derived much more from magic than from religion in the true sense.

OTHER FORMS OF CULT : PRAYER

§ 187. Although the sacrifice occupies the largest place among the forms of the religion, it does not cover them all : the "sacraments" of private life, the marriage and funeral rites, are not sacrifices. On the other hand, while prayer is a fundamental element in the sacrifice, there is also a prayer other than that with a votive purpose, and independent of the sacrificial act. It is probable that in the period of the hymns, prayer was regarded as functioning autonomously : it had its own laws and requirements, and was in fact a hardly less technical instrument than the other religious forms.

But for the most part prayer is found in correlation with the sacrificial offering. Every act in the sacrifice is accompanied by a formula (yajus) pronounced in a low voice, except in the case of exhortations, praisha, which are pronounced in a loud voice. There are declamations, shastra, by a single officiant, of verses, more or less long, with repetitions and insertions of the syllable Om. The puro' nuvakya and yajya are two verses which summon the god to approach and to eat. In the soma ceremonies there are important passages which are sung (stotra) in trio, corresponding to the recited portions : three combined verses (tricha) or complex stanzas (pragatha), the modes of performance of which are called stoma ; the tunes are the saman (see § 36).

Allusion is made to an "internal", mental, sacrifice (cf. the pranagnihotra of Vaikhanasa), which can be used in case of urgency. The part played by thought, side by side with word and action, is emphasised many times in the hymns (as also in the Avesta).

THE OFFERING

§ 188. What is offered is in part thrown into the fire, and in part eaten by the officiants, who thus share in the life of the gods : this food is divine, as the Brahmanas constantly remark.

What is offered to the gods is what one likes to eat oneself : agricultural products, milk in its various forms, butter (melted, i.e. ghrita, "that which is heated"), barley, and rice, especially in the form of cakes. The character of the oblations is strictly laid down. The cake for Agni is prepared on twelve kapala, of earthenware (see §195), that for Indra on eleven, etc. ; in the mortuary cult and the offerings to Rudra the requirements are less rigorous. These edible offerings are supplemented by scents, seats, clothing (in the funerary and domestic cult).

There are animal sacrifices (pashu), which stand in contrast to the vegetable sacrifices (ishti). The victim is usually the goat, but also other animals, from the bull to the donkey and the dog (this last in the sacrifice to the Rakshas). The horse sacrifice, which was accompanied by the slaughter of a large number of other animals, occupies a place apart. The correlation between the nature of the god and the offering made to him is more obvious than in the vegetable sacrifices.

HUMAN SACRIFICE

§ 189. The human sacrifice is described as an independent and solemn ceremony (see §215). In addition, traces of it are to be noticed in the Agnichayana, where it is said that "formerly" five victims were sacrificed, including a man, and that their heads were walled up in the first layer of bricks, while the bodies were thrown into the water with which the clay was mixed—a magical operation with slaughter of a man as its basis. Originally the Rajasuya must have been accompanied by a human sacrifice, a memory of which survives in the recitation of the shaunahshepa. There is, as it were, a background of blood-ritual. The human sacrifice is considered the most efficacious of all : it makes the sacrificer equal to Prajapati, the Great Victim. On the other hand, the burning of the widow, is not prescribed in the liturgy, though it must have been known in Vedic times, is not a sacrifice in the direct sense.

THE SOMA

§ 190. The Vedic offering *par excellence* is the soma, a kind of intoxicating drink, dangerous if drunk to excess, which promotes an ecstatic state of mind and is believed to make man immortal. The plant has not been identified : it has been supposed a species of asclepiad (asclepias acida : hemp, according to Jogesh Chandra Ray, wild rhubarb, according to Aurel Stein). The operations connected with the soma are described in great detail : purchase of the plant (measurement, payment according to quantity in terms of the cow, with corporal punishment for the seller : perhaps because the trade was illegal ?), transport in carts, or sometimes on the head, carrying of the plant in procession, drawing water for the preparation of the liquor, pressing of the stems "swelled" by the water (a distinction is made between the great pressing and the small or "dumb"), straining of the juice which runs into the vats, mixture with water and milk, sometimes with honey, and decanting. It is doubtful weather the soma was a popular drink ; the usual drink, though despised and partially forbidden, was sura, a liquor extracted from various plants, and used, though rarely, in the cult (in the Vajapeya and the Sautramani).

The lay sacrificer, if he is a Brahman, and the officiant priest partake of the remains of the dishes offered, sharing them in a definite order. These remains (uchchhishta) gave rise in the

Brahmanas to an enormous cosmogonic symbology. The formula with which consumption begins is the "call to Ida": the ida is the part of the offering into which the goddess Ida is asked to descend in order to convey to the sacrificer the quality of the victim : an absorption of strength or healing (Oldenberg), a transubstantiation (Hubert and Mauss) rather than a communion or ceremony of alliance. Rites connected with harmful forces, with the manes, and Rudra, do not involve eating. Certain families of priests had the right to five shares, others to four.

THE SACRED FIRES

§ 191. The fire acts as the intermediary between the sacrificer and the god and carries the offering to him, but in origin it was primarily a magical agent of purification which drove away evil spirits, as many details, especially in the domestic cult, still show. Originally the offering was not placed in the fire but on the ground, on strewn grass (later also in water, in the air, on the earth), as has remained the practice in the cult of the dead, the Sarpabali, the Shulagava, etc. (Oldenberg). But eventually the predominant function became that of the sacrificial fire, and all the Vedic ritual rests on the institution of the fire.

An important distinction was established between (a) the sacrifice at a single fire, perhaps the earlier form, and suitable especially for domestic ceremonies performed by the master of the house, and (b) the sacrifice at three fires, proper to the public cult and especially to the soma sacrifices, where undoubtedly it had its origin (Knauer). The first, the only one named in the Rigveda, the fire "of the master of the house", garhapatya, descended from the ancient domestic hearth, the only one which is kept perpetually burning, from which fire is taken to light the two others, is round in shape, and is used principally to cook the offerings. To the east of this stands the "oblatory" fire, ahavaniya, square in shape, into which the cooked oblation is poured. To the south is the fire "of the dish to be brought at the end (of the ceremony for the dakshina)", anvaharyapachana, or fire "of the south", dakshinagni, which is shaped like a half-moon. It drives away evil spirits and receives the offerings destined for them. For the subsidiary fires, see § 206.

The fire is maintained by means of logs, samidh, and sometimes, temporarily, by means of a grass called kusha.

A frequent practice is circumambulation about an object, a victim, a consecrated instrument, and especially the fire. The movement takes place in the direction of the sun's motion, with the right side presented to the honoured object, whence the name pradakshina. In the ritual for the dead, the movement takes place in the oppoisite direction, apasavya. This is an Indo-European purificatory practice (Caland).

THE YAJAMANA

§ 192. The sacrifice is performed for an individual, the yajamana, "he who sacrifices for himself", who bears the expense. There are no certain evidences of clan sacrifices, still less of sacra publica, but at most of a village cult, of which the sabhya fire may be a relic. Even when the yajamana is a king (he may be a lord or a rich Brahman, or theoretically anyone of the three higher castes), the sacrifice remains a private act. Helped by his wife, his distributes the honoraria and pronounces the few verses which the ritual texts allot to him, probably taking the place of an officiant. The essential parts of the ceremony are the duty of priests. On the purohita, see § 246.

THE OFFICIANTS

§ 193. The officiating priests are chosen for a particular ceremony (the choice is made by means of an elaborate rite), and are given precise functions. It is always provided that such a one among them can take the place of such another. The most important of them, the hotri, comes down from Indo-Iranian antiquity (Avestan zaotar, "priest") ; moreover, the list of seven officiants of the Rigveda agrees as regards functions with that of the eight priests of the Avesta.

They are the hotri or "pourer" of the oblation ("caller", according to Hertel), who in the historical period has become the chief reciter, whose duty it is to recite the stanzas of the Rigveda, either in shastra (see § 187) or in verses or detached formulae. The adhvaryu ("charged with acts or with paths ?)") repeats only the yajus (see § 31), except so far as he takes the place of the hotri ; the essential part of his function is to act, to move about the site, looking after the fires, making the altar ready, manipulating the utensils, cooking the oblations. He is the central figure of the sacrifice regarded as a manual operation. The agnidh helps him in cleaning up and looking after the fires (later the agnidhra), "lighter of the fire" who has an Iranian parallel. The rest are less prominent : the maitravaruna, "priest of Mitra-Varuna", who gives the exhortations, and takes the place of the hotri in the animal sacrifices; the potri, "clarifier", of the soma, who also has an Iranian parallel ; the nestri, or "conductor" of the sacrificer's wife ; and finally the brahman, who in the Rigveda recited the verses to Indra for the soma sacrifice, a part which later devolved upon the brahmanacchamsin. The brahman's part eventually broadened into that of overseer of the cult, "physician of the sacrifice". He "orders" the performance of the act, and in case of error performs the expiation laid down as appropriate. He sits in the middle of the area, and in principle remains silent throughout the ceremony. His importance is shown by the fact that half the total honorarium is reserved for him. In the magical and domestic rituals his part is more extensive, and no doubt his original function was that of a witch-doctor of the type of the shaman (Caland). The name itself indicates this: "man of the sacred", the animate counterpart of the neuter brahman (see § 165); the technical equivalent of the more commonly used "priest", or representative of the priest caste (see § 246).

§ 194. The Rigveda fails to mention the name of the three singers (udgatri), who during the soma sacrifice, sometimes together and sometimes alternately, perform the fragments which are sung.

While the agnihotra requires only one priest, the adhvaryu, the soma sacrifice makes use of 16, and ultimately 17 officiants, who are divided into four groups under the leadership of the hotri, the adhvaryu, the udgatri and the brahman.

There is nothing to suggest the existence of a priestly corporation, and the ritual as a whole is that of a single cult.

THE ARENA OF THE SACRIFICE

§ 195. The Vedic cult knows no temple. The ceremonies take place either in the sacrificer's house or on a plot of ground close by, which must be flat and covered with grass, on which the three alters are arranged. Fixed places are provided for the brahman, and for the yajamana and his wife, also for the water which has been "brought", and for the mound on which refuse is placed. In the middle is the vedi, "altar", with a slightly hollowed surface, in the form of a rectangle with concave sides. Its outline has been traced in the ground by a sort of "magic circle". On the altar are placed the oblatory substances; and the bottom of it is covered with bunches of grass (barhis, cf. Avestan baresman (see § 165), and barzis, ("cushion") for the gods to sit on while they eat. Sometimes the altar is a brick structure of considerable size (see § 217), which some have regarded as the first beginning of Indian architecture. Finally, in the soma ritual a mahavedi, chief altar, is traced in the form of a trapezium, which serves especially to receive the soma carts; and also an uttaravedi, "extra altar". The dimensions of these altars are laid down in great detail, as well as those of the shed which shelters the dhishnya, or minor fireplaces of the officiants, and various minor structures.

Among the instruments of the cult must be mentioned the series of ladles and cups; the kapala, dishes of earthenware, which placed together in horseshoe-shaped array form a raised surface on which the dough is spread; the instruments for pressing the soma, two boards covered with the hide of a red bull and with five stones (the pestle and mortar, mentioned in the hymns, are used only in the domestic rites) ; the two arani, pieces of wood which are rotated to kindle the fire ; the vessels of soma ; the post to which the victim is tied (see § 205 : there may be as many as 21), a sort of point of convergence of religious forces (Hubert and Mauss). In the Vaikhanasa Grihyasutra and the Baudhayana parishishta mention is made of images of gods (a non-Aryan influence has been assumed), and it has been inferred from a passage in the Rigveda (IV. 24. 10) that at an early period idols of Indra were used.

CONSECRATION

§ 196. The soma sacrifice is preceded by a consecration, diksha, "intention to adore" (it has also been interpreted as "intention to burn"). After a preliminary oblation the sacrificer bathes and stays in a hut, dressed in a black antelope's skin, sitting on another skin near the fire, with head covered, in silence, fasting to the point of exhaustion, and sleeping at night on the ground. In principle the priest is exempt from these observances.

It is without doubt a rite of the shamanist type (Oldenberg), which according to Hillebrandt illustrates a "heating" theme similar to the classical tapas. Nevertheless the Brahmanas regard the diksha as first of all the means to attain to the sacred, and following this Hubert and Mauss interpret the rite as a mimicry of a birth, consisting in freeing the body of the sacrificer from "the vices of his lay status, by cutting him off from the communal life".

§ 197. The reverse operation, which takes place at the end of the ceremony, is called the avabhritha, "carrying away" : the antelope skin is thrown into water, the sacrificer, his wife and the priests bathe : previously a purification, afterwards an act of removal of the sacred, similar to the ablution which concludes the study of the Veda (see § 226).

The fast and abstinence (sexual in particular) are prescribed at the beginning of many ceremonies. The tabus of which there are indications in the Vajapeya, the Agnichayana and some domestic rites are less common. In most cases they are aimed at guarding the subject from demons or avoiding certain dangers ; others are intended to impregnate him with a certain substance, water or solar heat, the strength of which is believed to increase his strength. Bathing and cutting the hair and beard figure as expiatory rites before and after ceremonies ; less often these practices are forbidden, the object being to avoid a loss of force.

HONORARIA

§ 198. The fees for the ritual are called dakshina, "generous (cow)" (the officiant normally being paid a cow), or perhaps an abbreviation of dakshinagni (see §191). From the Rigveda onwards the dakshina is the object of separate mention (the danastuti,), and the exaggeration characteristic of them is to be seen throughout the Vedic literature. According to the Satapatha the four fundamental dakshina are gold, the cow, clothes and the horse. In fact other articles of personal property are found mentioned, including animals (and slaves in the hymns ?). In the ritual a common dakshina is the boiled porridge anvaharya (see §191). The gift of land is mentioned, but only to be disapproved. The object given corresponds in principle to the character of the sacrifice which it completes ; it has some importance for the understanding of the realities of life in Vedic times (see §250).

TYPES OF SACRIFICE

§ 199. Sacrifices are divided into domestic, grihya, and public, shrauta or vaitanika, according to the absence or presence of priests, and according to the number of fires (see §191), but the division is not absolute. In addition to the samaskara, "sacraments", generally numbering 18, the domestic. rites include a daily sacrifice or "great sacrifice", mahayajna, and seven "sacrifices of cooked things", pakayajna. The public rites are either ishti or havirayajna, "oblations", on the one hand, or somasamstha, 'soma offices", (and similar rites), the one type and the other traditionally divided into seven groups.

From another standpoint the sacrifices are divided into prakriti, "bases", which serve as models, and from which are deduced the vikriti, the "derived" : thus the ishti have as prakriti the sacrifice at the syzygies. Each rite includes a "principal part" proper to it and some "members" which occur in several rites and form the tantra, "warp" : such are the prayaja, "preliminary offerings", and the anuyaja, "after offerings". Rites are nitya, "on a fixed date" (periodical or obligatory rites, such as those of the soma), or naimittika, "occasional" (also called kamya, "votive"). Those of domestic and public life are of course performed at times determined by external circumstances.

The Vedic sacrifice is presented as a kind of drama, with its actors, its dialogue, its portions set to music, its interludes and its climaxes.

(a) THE PUBLIC RITES

THE AGNYADHEYA

§ 200. The "installation of the fire", Agnyadheya, is the preliminary to all the manifestations of the public cult. The time at which it takes place is variable, but it usually lasts two days. On the first day, or day of fast (upasad), the huts are built for the two principal hearths, the garhapatya fire is lit provisionally by friction or by borrowing from another fire (that of a rich cattle-owner or a big sacrificer) and sometimes a game of dice, integrated into the sacrifice of a cow, also takas place. On the next day a new fire is solemnly produced by friction, a horse acting as witness. From the garhapatya a flame is taken to the ahavaniya and dakshina fires ; then the sabhya, "of the common room", hearth is lit. Finally come concluding oblations, and the prescription of observances for the sacrificer.

The punaradheya, "reinstallation", of the fire takes place when it appears that the preceding fires have not brought good fortune to the sacrificer. They are allowed to go out and are then lit again with kusha grass, either immediately or after an interval.

THE AGNIHOTRA

§ 201. The "oblation to the fire", Agnihotra, is the simplest of the public rites, and in a sense the most important : it is the sacrifice which every head of a Brahman or Vaishya family must offer, morning and evening, throughout his life. It takes place just before or after the rising of the sun and the appearance of the first star. It is an oblation of milk, sometimes together with vegetable substances, to Agni. When the fire-places have been cleaned and lit, a cow is brought and is milked by an "Aryan", the vessel into which the milk has been poured is heated, some spoonfuls are taken from it and poured into the fire, in two libations ; finally the officiant drinks the milk left in the ladle. Then follow libations of water to several divinities.

The Agnihotra, together with some propitiatory formulae and verses, is the Agnyupasthana, "adoration of the fires". The Agnihotra represents an ancient charm for fecundity, and at the same time, as the Satapatha states, a solar charm (Dumont).

THE DARSHAPURNAMSA

§ 202. The sacrifices "of the full and the new moon", last for a day ; at the new moon there is an additional day devoted to preliminaries : bringing the fire, milking, making various instruments, diksha. The inaugural part consists in husking and crushing some grains of rice, cooking cakes, preparing the altar, making butter, and various sprinklings and anointings. The principal part includes recitation of the fifteen verses associated with "lighting", and two libations of butter before and after the enumeration of the ancestors of the sacrificer, followed by the "choice of the hotri". Then come the "preliminary offerings" of butter, and the "principal offerings" of butter and cakes addressed to Agni and Soma. The remains are distributed among the officiants, the "appeal to Ida" (see § 190) is made, and the anvaharya (see § 191) is given as honoraria. The "concluding offerings" bring to an end the sacrifice in the proper sense, though there follow as appendages various minor rites : burning of the bunch of grass and of the fence, offering of the portions left over to All-the-Gods, the four "oblations to the wives" of the gods, etc.

THE CHATURMASYA

§ 203. The four-monthly rites, Chaturmasya, are the Vaishvadeva, performed at the beginning of Spring, the Varunapraghasa during the rainy season, and the Sakamedha in the Autumn. Internal features of these rites emphasise the connection with the seasons, such as the oblation of karira fruits which is thrown on top of the other offerings during second ceremony, and represents a rain charm. Each of the three rites includes five inaugural oblations, and an invocation of the Maruts. A remarkable feature of the second is the construction of two effigies in barley paste covered with wool representing a ram and a sheep with prominent sexual organs. Another episode is a sort of confession : the wife is asked, "How many lovers have you ?" and she has to make an explicit reply or at least to hold up as many blades of grass as she has lovers. All this shows the intrusion of popular practices. There follow an expiatory oblation to Varuna, the god who keeps a watch for sin, and a bath of purification.

The third of these sacrifices includes a funerary ceremony with offerings to Rudra Tryambaka. At a crossroads he is offered as many cakes as the family has members, and one extra which is buried in an ant-hill. The fire is circumambulated, and then the remains of the cakes are thrown into the air, picked up again, and placed in two baskets hung at the end of a beam "out of the reach of a bull" : this is the offering to Rudra to induce him to depart without causing any harm. Originally this rite was performed without the use of fire (Arbman).

The Shunasiriya, associated with the rite above mentioned, is an observance of labourers addressed to Shuna and Sira, spirits of the plough. It takes place in the intercalary month.

THE AGRAYANA

§ 204. The rites of the "first fruits", Agrayana, consist in offerings of rice in the Autumn, barley in the Spring, sometimes millet in the Autumn or the rainy season, and bamboo shoots in the Summer. The divinities are Indra-Agni, Soma and others, and the honoraria are suited in part to the seasons.

There are innumerable rites, which follow the model of the sacrifice of the syzygies, grouped under the name Kamyeshti, "votive sacrifices" ; they are magical performances which made their way into the high cult later than the Atharvan practices (Caland). They are used in order to obtain health, long life, victory, prosperity, sons, successful journeys, to bring rain, and to bewitch an enemy. Several of them are in fact nothing other than Prayashchitta (see § 218). Various divinities are invoked.

THE PASHU (BANDHA)

§ 205. In addition to the animal sacrifices which occur at various stages in the soma rites. there is an independent sacrifice, annual or half-yearly, founded on the sacrifice at the syzygies. The oblation of milk is replaced by the immolation of a goat. The ceremony lasts for two days or one. A preliminary operation of interest is the setting up of the post to which the victim is tied : the tree, of the right species, is ceremonially cut down, a libation is offered to the stump, and a hole is dug on the outskirts of the sacrificial arena. When it has been driven into the ground the post is tied with a cord at the height of the navel. The animal is rubbed down, anointed, watered, enclosed in a "magic circle", and finally strangled or stabbed with a dagger by a special officiant, the shamitri ; care is taken that the animal utters no cry, and that those present turn their faces away.

The oblation is offered in two parts, at an interval of time. The great epiploon (vapa) is removed and is cooked on a spit and offered separately. It is the part richest in fat, the atman of the victim. The blood is sprinkled about for the benefit of the demons. Then follows the dismemberment of the carcase into 18 parts, which are cooked into one broth, the heart being set aside ; a part is allotted to the divinities, the excrement, blood and entrails to the demons, and another portion forms the ida (see §190). Finally the officiants and the sacrificer share and consume the rest. This sacrifice seems to be intended to buy the life of a man at the price of the animal (Schwab).

THE SOMA SACRIFICE : THE AGNISHTOMA

§ 206. The fundamental and typical Vedic sacrifices are those of the soma. The basis is the Jyotishtoma, "praise of light", ekaha, "of one day", consisting of three pressings, at morning, noon and night. The Agnishtoma, "praise of Agni", is the type of the ekaha, the six other known varieties being treated as derivatives of it : they are the Ukthya, in which the last pressing is matched with the others as regards the number of passages sung and recited ; the Sodashin, which as its name indicates adds a sixteenth passage ; the Atyagnishtoma, a simplified version of the preceding one ; the Atiratra, in which 29 passages are recited or sung, and there is a nocturnal session in which soma is drunk by turns, a survival of a former orgiastic ceremony. Finally there are the Aptoryama, with 33 passages, and the Vajapeya (see §212).

The Agnishtoma is performed annually in the Spring, on a day of syzygy. It consists of preliminary operations : preparation of the arena, diksha, etc. ; and three days of upasad, "homage", or perhaps rather "investment" : (a) the purchase of the soma (see §190) and hospitable reception (atithya) to King Soma, including the tanunapatra, a sort of pact of hospitality ; (b) the measuring out and building of the altars ; (c) the preparation and installation of the two chariots for the soma, huts, hearths, planks for pressing, the four resonators (cavities arranged to amplify the sound of the pressing), the procession of Agni-Soma, which accompanies the oblation of the goat, and in which the sons, grandsons and relatives of the sacrificer take part, and finally the drawing and carrying in procession of the "night-passing" waters.

§ 207. After various preparatory operations, including the drawing of the water intended for the soma, the morning pressing takes place, consisting of a "free-pressing", accompanied by a first libation, and the great pressing. This is series of drawings and oblations, mainly of soma, but also of "pressing cakes", rice cakes, parched barley, flour in sour milk, parched rice, and a hot mixture of milk and sour milk. During these operations five musical passages and five recitations take place, including the "Litany of the Pole", which comes down from Rigvedic times. Then follow the drinking of soma by the officiants, the twelve seasonal libations, etc., and another sacrifice of a goat, dedicated to Agni.

Tke climax of the ceremony, the midday pressing, is similar to that of the morning, with the same number of chants and recitations. The characteristic oblation is of hot sour milk. During these oblations the honoraria are distributed : the sacrificer gives 7, 21, 60 or 1,000 cows, or even all his wealth, including his daughter, whom he may marry to one of the officiants.

The evening pressing involves only two chants and two recitations, of which the last, the "Praise of Agni", has given its name to the whole ceremony. The "tail of the sacrifice" consists of the libation of the "yoking of bay horses", and expiatory rites, a salute to the sun, the "dissolution of the alliance", the avabhritha (see §197), and finally a new animal sacrifice, that of a sterile cow, which however, like the two animal sacrifices performed earlier, may be replaced by the sacrifice of eleven animals.

§ 208. Each god separately and by name takes part in this sacrificial symposium, and then All-the-Gods together. Indra occupies a special place, and the midday pressing falls to him (and to the Maruts), while the Ribhus had their place, at least originally, in the evening pressing. Agni is invoked but little. As to the significance of the rite, it has been regarded as a rain charm, "in this sense, that the soma of its own strength makes the waters of the sky to fall" (Oldenberg). Hillebrandt says that it is a magical act intended to provide the gods with the lunar nectar symbolised by the soma juice. In the view of Hubert and Mauss the rite describes the birth and death of the god. In any case the performance must originally have been shorter, and there have been heterogeneous additions, such as the Pravargya (see §209). As to the upasad, they are practices intended to guard against the enterprises of enemies. Altogether, the "springtime" character of the ceremony is apparent.

THE PRAVARGYA

§ 209. The rite of "placing on the fire" of the drink is an integral part of the Agnishtoma, where it is performed among the preliminary ceremonies. It is an oblation to the Ashvins of goat's and cow's milk, heated in a vessel covered with a plate of gold and resting on a plate of silver. The Pravargya however forms an independent rite, about which the Brahmanas have elaborated a mystical doctrine : the vessel is called "great man" or "sovereign", is regarded as the head of the sacrifice, has the shape of a human head, and is the object of special adoration, and the purpose of the rite is, by means of the sacrifice of a head, to make the gods produce the mystical body of the sacrificer. On the plane of myth, it is associated with the demon Makha, the doublet of Vishnu, who was decapitated by some of the gods by a trick. The magical meaning is clear : the vessel represents the sun, and the celebration of the rite is intended to procure for the sacrificer the "honey" of the sun (Ronnow).

THE OTHER SOMA SACRIFICES

§ 210. There are other sacrifices of the duration of a day, such as the Gosava, which includes strange practices (behaving like a cow : grazing, copulating with mother, sister and cousin), and especially the Vratyastoma, the object of which was to introduce into Brahman society non-Brahman Aryans, on condition that they ceased to live as Vratyas. Hauer regards these Vratyas as a fraternity who followed ecstatic practices and magical rites of their own, of which the Mahavrata (see §211) has preserved traces. The Atharvaveda presents them as divinised beings. It has often been suggested that they entered India earlier than the general Aryan invasion.

The sacrifices lasting for more than a day are :

The Ahina, rites "of (several) days", actually of numbers from two to twelve, and, even, as seems to be implied by the upasad, as much as a month. They are series of ekaha, modified and combined, and always finishing with some atiratra. The best known are Ashvamedha (see §214) and the Rajasuya (see §213), but others include interesting practices, such as the Paundarika or Shabalihoma, in which the sacrificer, after a special diksha, makes a libation of honey and sour milk to Shabali and then proceeds to the forest, where he shouts "Shabali !" three times. The rite attains its object if an animal other than a dog or a donkey replies to his call.

The Sattra or "sessions", which last at least twelve days, more often a year, and theoretically as much as twelve years. Lay sacrificers were not allowed, one of the officiants acting as sacrificer, and all performing diksha. Moreover there were no honoraria, the ceremonies being regarded as purely priestly performances. The principal element is the sadaha, "period of six days". The typical year-long sattra is the Gavamayana, "walk of the cows" (i.e. of the signs of the solar zodiac entering one after another into conjunction with the sun). It covers two periods of six months, separated by the solstice, and symmetrical like the two sides of a roof of which the ridge (vishuvat) is formed by the solstitial day, a day which is marked out by a distinct celebration.

THE MAHAVRATA

§ 211. The "great observance", Mahavrata, which terminates the Gavamayana must originally have been a separate rite : apparently a celebration of the winter solstice (of the summer solstice, according to Hillebrandt), a sort of mystery (Hauer) including popular practices which continued to be observed through the classical period. Music of drums and lutes plays a great part, the hotri balances on a seesaw, abusive and obscene dialogues take place, and also a ritual copulation. An Aryan and a Shudra dispute for a disc of white leather. There is a dance with two-handled vases performed by girls. Finally there is a dramatic representation of speculations on breathing and food. The dominant idea is that of fecundity (Keith, Hauer, who remark on the Indo-European survivals to be noted).

There were also "walking sessions" or processions, having for objective the river Sarasvati, and followed by a bath. This is the origin of the classical yatra.

THE VAJAPEYA

§ 212. The "drink of victory", Vajapeya, is also no doubt one of those rites which are secondarily associated with the soma observances. It includes some peculiar features : a race by horses yoked to 17 chariots, won by the sacrificer, in which the course is marked by the flight of 17 arrows ; in the middle a Brahman perched on a chariot wheel on the top of a post made the wheel turn round as the race proceeded. There is a sort of baptism with pouring of water. Finally there is the "ascent to the sun" : the sacrificer and his wife climb towards a wheel made of dough which is fixed to the top of the sacred post and represents the sun. The Vajapeya is a vast and complex rite which must originally have served as the prelude to the Rajasuya, and lasts from 17 days to a year. It is a fertility rite. Przyluski notes some affinities to the Babylonian horse sacrifice.

THE RAJASUYA

§ 213. The "royal consecration", Rajasuya, which was nevertheless incorporated in the soma sacrifices, does not appear to be very ancient, at least in its present form. The consecration of the king is performed by sprinkling : an officiant and then soma representatives of the people approach in succession and sprinkle the king with water and other substances, butter, honey, etc., from a cup of udumbara wood. The king is seated on a throne of the same wood, covered with a tiger skin. His dignitaries stand round him, and the officiant presents him to the people. Then follow some curious scenes, in part no doubt non-Aryan : the king makes a mimic raid upon a herd of cows belonging to one of his relatives (according to another version, he himself lays the blame for the raid on the relative), and then gives a part of his property to this relative. These actions exhibit the two aspects of the taking of power by the king : rivalry and suzerainty. According to the Satapatha the purpose of this mimic performance is to regain the virility which the relative had taken from the king : Dumezil interprets the episode and this explanation of it as a ritualised version of the myth of Varuna (see §118). It seems in any case that before Indra entered upon the scene Varuna must have been the deity invoked in the greater part of the Rajasuya.

The ceremony concludes with a number of representations : the king takes his seat on a tiger skin, plays a game of dice with the adhvaryu ; the stake being a cow, and wins. etc. Among the oblations is the dashapeya, in which ten participants drink together from ten cups. The honoraria paid at the Rajasuya are enormous : in extreme cases they amount to 240,000 cows. But the ritual also knows simpler forms of royal consecration.

THE ASHVAMEDHA

§ 214. The "horse sacrifice", Ashvamedha, is the most imposing and best known of the Vedic rituals, the highest manifestation of the royal authority, a demonstration of triumph indulged in by the victorious king. It lasts for three days, but the preparatory ceremonies extended over a year or even two. It is a soma sacrifice, but includes a series of other important sacrifices. It takes place in February-March. Four officiants, the four wives of the king with their 400 attendants, and a multitude of spectators take part. After several preliminary rites the horse, a prize charger, is brought, and the carcase of a dog is thrown under its hoofs. After a series of oblations it is released, together with a hundred other horses, and escorted by 400 young men charged with watching over it and offering combat to various imaginary enemies. Meanwhile in the sacrificial arena recitations of legends, cythara music and oblations are performed. At the end of a year the horse returns, and then there is an animal sacrifice, diksha lasting 12 days, and the measuring out of the altars. There follow 12 days of upasad and three days of soma sacrifice, the upasad and the first day of the soma sacrifice following the pattern of the Agnishtoma. The second day marks the climax : the horse is shown some mares, it is yoked to a gilded war chariot, it is taken to a pond, it is anointed, and 101 pearls are attached to its mane and tail. Then the great animal sacrifice takes place : a group of most various animals (602, according to one text) are brought together and tied to posts round the horse ; the domestic animals are killed and the others released. Then the horse is killed by strangling. The king's wives walk round the carcase, the principal wife lies down beside it in a position simulating copulation, the priests and women exchange an obscene dialogue, and then follows a dialogue in enigmas between the officiants and the sacrificer. There is an oblation of the epiploon and of soma, dismemberment of the horse and the other victims, and oblation of their blood. The ceremonies of the third day form an atiratra (see §206) and wind up with an avabhritha in which criminals and sinners take part. At the end comes a new sacrifice of 21 sterile cows, and the distribution of the honoraria (which had been going on ostentatiously throughout the three days) culminating in the gift to the priests of the four wives or their attendants.

§ 215. The Ashvamedha is a royal and popular festival intended to obtain prosperity for the kingdom and for the subjects ; it is at the same time a charm for obtaining victory or sovereignty, a fertility rite, and a manifestation of the solar cult (Dumont). The rite goes back to Rigvedic times, though at that period it must have taken a simpler form. It may be of Indo-European origin (see §623). According to the Brahmanas it is Prajapati who is sacrificed in the form of the horse, as a figure consecrating and consecrated.

The human sacrifice, Purushamedha, closely follows the Ashvamedha. It consist in adding to the animal victims a man, Brahman or Kshatriya, who has been bought for the price of 1000 cows and 100 horses. Like the horse, he is allowed to go free for a year, and when he is killed the queen lies beside his corpse. The Satapatha refers to 166 men having been sacrificed, but the event is not described, and there is reason to think that it may have been symbolic.

THE SAUTRAMANI

§ 216. The Sautramani, rite "dedicated to Sutraman" (the good protector, i.e. Indra), occurs in two forms, one independent and the other forming part of the Rajasuya. It is an oblation of sura (see §190), made specially for the benefit of a man who has been "purged by excess" in drinking too much soma. The sura is mixed with milk, after hairs of a lion, a tiger and a wolf have been thrown into it, and the ceremony follows the rite of the soma, the name of which is mentioned several times. The rite is dedicated to the Ashvins and Sarasvati as well as Indra, and is complex, including an oblation to the spirits of the dead, many animal sacrifices, and many others. Towards the end the sacrificer sits with his left foot on a plate of silver and his right foot on a plate of gold, 32 oblations of melted fat are offered before him, and the remainder of the fat is sprinkled over his body, which has previously been perfumed. He calls his servants by their ritual names, and they raise him from the ground and place him upon a tiger's skin, while he declares himself "steadfast in the royal power", a part of the rite which is obviously inspired by the Rajasuya. Oldenberg interprets the whole ceremony as a magical operation imitating the myth about Indra being cured by the Ashvins after an overdose of soma. Ronnow considers that it is derived from the myth of Namuchi, and was originally an orgiastic rite involving a human sacrifice. Hillebrandt declares that the Sautramani is not of Brahmanic origin.

THE AGNICHAYANA

§ 217. The Agnichayana (or simply Chayana), the "stacking (of the bricks for the altar) of the fire", is performed, optionally, together with the soma sacrifice. It begins with an animal sacrifice of an original type (see §189). The preliminaries extend over a year, and include among other things the digging and preparation of the clay for the bricks, the baking of the bricks, the ceremonial concerning the fire, which is preserved in an earthenware pan, ukha, the construction of which is minutely described, which the sacrificer must carry each day on a throne and worship, making the "steps of Vishnu". The clay which is to be used to make the ukha has been taken from the footprint of a horse, which is then driven away.

Next takes place the measuring out of the agnikshetra, "field of the fire", marked with 261 (or 394) stones, and the construction of the garhapatya hearth, to which the fire is to be taken. The sacrificial arena is then measured, ploughed and sown. The usual soma ceremonies begin, and meanwhile the building of the uttaravedi proceeds : five courses of bricks, making 10,800 bricks in all, bearing different names and arranged in prescribed patterns (often in the form of a bird with outstretched wings). While the bricks are being brought to the spot and consecrated, a white horse appears at the head of the procession bearing the materials ; it is led along the furrows, and then driven away. A amall golden image of a man and a living tortoise are buried in the lowest layer of bricks. In the centre of the construction a "naturally perforated" stone is placed, and the whole is levelled off by means of a layer of earth. The period of this operation varies from a few days to a year. Next follow oblations, among which are 425 offerings of sesame and wild plants to Rudra and the Rudras, sprinkling of the altar, and its "refreshment" by means of the point of reed which is drawn along it. Some chants are sung, and then the officiants mount upon the altar and sprinkle it anew. The fire is brought with great pomp in the form of a firebrand which is placed on a vessel of milk on the central stone. There are libations to Vaishvanara, to the 49 Winds, to Agni, to the Months, etc., and then the pouring of oil, abhisheka, on the officiant. It is only after all this that the great soma ceremonies take place, and to these are added the special offerings. The sacrificer who has performed the Agnichayana is subjected to certain observances : not to walk in the rain, not to eat the flesh of birds, not to live with a woman except of his own caste.

The Agnichayana is primarily a sacrifice to Agni, but it has been made into a system of cosmogonic and mystical symbols of unusual elaboration (see §169). The ukha, which is called "the head of Makha" (see §153), reminds us of the notion of the "head of the sacrifice" referred to in the myths about the demons who possess the cult beverages and the fights with the gods which result (Ronnow).

THE PRAYASHCHITTA

§ 218. The Prayashchitta ("thought of satisfaction, propitiation", a term which occurs as early as the Atharvaveda) are the "expiations" provided in case of error concerning instrument, place or time, honorarium, officiants or wife, fault of inattention (omission, alteration, performance of acts or recitation of formulae in a wrong order), or accident (extinction of the fire, breaking of a utensil, a crow alighting on the sacred vessel, lowing by the sacrificial cow, theft or harm to the soma, sickness or death of the sacrificer). They may also be used to compensate for the ill effects of competition between a sacrifice and that of a rival. These faults, some of which, it will be seen, are of the character of simple omens, involve consequences which may be more than the mere annulment of the fruit of the sacrifice. An immediate remedy is necessary ; it is sometimes the brahman (see §193) and sometimes the adhvaryu who orders that it be undertaken. Prayashchitta consist in sacrifices of the usual type, ordinarily addressed to Varuna, and set forth in the manuals in connection with the principal types of rites. They are conceived as "means of defence" which operate automatically, without the intervention of conscious choice. However account is taken of good or bad intention.

Because of the ruling idea of defilement, water plays a great part, and then ashes, gold, and butter. Fasts of the type of the kricchra, etc., make no appearance until the Vaikhanasa texts. In certain cases it is permissible to replace the object which has been defiled.

A number of these Prayashchitta form part of the Kamyeshti (see §204), and others are performed as part of the ceremonies themselves, as in the Varunapraghasa (see §203) ; they are also found in the domestic cult. Some are described in the Dharmasutras. It is possible that some go back to the Indo-Iranian period. The ritual process, formulae and oblation are made to imitate the fault which is being expiated.

(b) THE DOMESTIC RITES

THE OBLATIONS

§ 219. The domestic rites consist mainly of a series of small sacrifices, with simple ceremonial, in which the offerings are usually vegetable, rarely animal. The basis of the offering is ajya, melted and clarified butter. All are similar in outline : the principal oblation is accompanied by the usual preliminary and terminal oblations. The utensils are confined to one or two spoons, some blades of grass for cleaning, water, and some twigs of firewood. The fire, which is surrounded by an enclosure of logs, is situated in the house, or sometimes outside, and is produced by friction or borrowing. The master of the house, grihapati, has the responsibility of maintaining it, as also have his son, wife, daughter and pupil. He performs the rites himself, but in case of need his wife can replace him, as also can the brahman.

The details of the rites are given variously in different sources. Generally they describe short offerings of rice and barley made morning and evening to Agni-Prajapati on the one hand, and to Surya-Prajapati on the other (according to the Vaikhanasa, and offering to the Vishvedeva) ; then five daily "great sacrifices", mahayajna, of various origin ; the devayajna for the gods, performed twice a day ; the bhutayajna, "sacrifice for the beings", or bali ; the pitriyajna for the ancestral spirits ; the brahmayajna, consisting of recitations of the Veda ; the manushyayajna for men, consisting in feeding guests. The most interesting are the oblations of the bali type, which derive from a popular cult ; they are addressed to the "beings", i.e. to various gods or objects, originally perhaps to the inferior gods, demons and spirits (Arbman). What is essential to them is that they are performed on the ground, sometimes in the centre of the area, sometimes on the threshold, but also on the grindstone and the mortar, at the head and at the foot of the bed, in the water butt, in the air etc. ; the portion left over is placed on the ground towards the south for the ancestral spirits. According to some authors, some food is also thrown to the dogs and to the birds, and an oblation is made to the snakes.

§ 220. The oblations at the syzygies are similar to those of the principal cult (see §202), but simpler. There is a Spring ceremony, when models of animals are made of dough ; and a votive rite on the "sixth" day of the fortnight, and another consisting of the six oblations on the first day of the fortnight.

At the beginning of the rainy season the Sarpabali, "offering to the serpents", takes place. It is an incantation to avert the danger from snakes, consisting of oblations to various divinities, and also an oblation to the snakes themselves, which is offered outside the house (they are offered water, a comb, scents, a mirror, etc.). This bali is repeated every day until the time when, on the return of the dry season, the beds of the sacrificer and his wife, which have been raised above the ground, are put down on it again.

§ 221. It is also an oblation to the snakes which is the basis of the Agrahayani, a rite in the course of which, when the beds have been replaced on the ground, the master of the house, with his family in order of age, sits down on a cot and propitiate the earth. Other practices, sweeping, oiling and fumigating the house with burning herbs, seem to derive from a new year rite. All this clearly belongs to a popular cult.

Among the "occasional" rites is the Arghya, "reception of guests" (originally guests of note), which consists in making various gifts—a cushion, water (for various purposes, in particular for washing the feet), honey mixed with other substances, and finally a cow—winding up with the sacrifice of a cow, whence the name goghna given to a guest.

The ceremonies associated with the building of a house are complex : precise directions are given as to the nature of the ground, the day to be chosen, the tracing of the outline, the draining away of water, the setting up of the doors. Religious performances take place before pillars are erected. When the house is complete, there are an oblation, prayers, sprinklings, sometimes animal sacrifice. Some authors require that the ceremony be repeated annually.

§ 222. There are many agricultural rites. At the beginning of Autumn there is a sacrifice for the prosperity of the herds.

Thers is a sacrifice "of the ox on the spit", Shulagava, which takes place at night outside the village, in honour of Rudra (according to some texts it was a simple bali performed before images of Rudra and his wife and son—Arbman). There is a rite for the marking of the cattle ; and a rite of the release of a bull, Vrishotsarga, that is the gift of a young bull (later "married" to some heifers called "mothers" to the commune —no doubt an old Aryan usage. There are various rites performed during ploughing, sowing, mowing, gathering in, and threshing, with offerings to the queen of the moles and of the mice. There is in particular an oblation of butter to Sita, the "furrow", and to Urvara, the "cultivated field", and also to spirits who protect the furrow ; it is an offering of first-fruits similar to the Agrayana (see §204). These minor practices allow us to see religious life at closer quarters than does the high ceremonial, and they are moreover characteristic of Hinduism rather than of Vedism. Unfortunately the descriptions of them that we possess are brief and obsure.

THE SACRAMENTS

§ 223. The practices above-mentioned do not, however, give us the essential part of the domestic ritual : that is to be found in the ceremonies which from birth (and even before) mark the stages of the life of the "Aryan". Most of them are of a strictly magical character, in which the sacrifice is only of secondary importance. For girls the ritual is simplified (the formulae are dispensed with) or even abolished. These ceremonies are called Samskara, "consecration, sacrament".

The first is the Garbhadana, "conception" (Vaikhanasa puts the Nisheka and the Ritusamgamana first), a series of oblations during which the husband touches his wife's body with darbha grass, moving upwards from the navel. Some months later takes place the Pumsavana, "begetting of a male", during which the powder of a shoot of the nyagrodha is introduced into the wife's nostrils, she is made to drink sour milk into which a grain of barley and two beans have been thrown, and she is asked "What are you drinking ?" to which she replies "Of the begetting of a male." Her limbs are anointed with butter to prevent an abortion. This is followed (or sometimes preceded) by the Simantonnayana, "parting (of the hair) by a line", which takes place in the fourth month after the first signs of pregnancy ; it is a fertility rite which was originally part of the nuptial ceremonies (Gonda). The instrument used is a porcupine's quill with three white marks. The hair on the top of the head is parted, some green fruit of the udumbara are tied round the young woman's neck, and meanwhile some recitation and music take place.

§ 224. At the time of birth, the surroundings are given unction to guard against evil spirits, and the mother is sprinkled with water. All the knots in the house are untied. When the child is born the Jatakarman, "birth ceremoney", takes place : a special fire is lit, the smoke of which is allowed to spread, and for ten days offerings of sesame and rice are made, especially to the "mothers", who personify diseases. At the end of this period of "impurity", on the twelfth day, the fire is allowed to go out.

The Jatakarman includes various rites intended to endow the child with health and intelligence. The father gives him breath, and his "first nourishment" (prashana) is presented to him with a gold instrument, or rather, a fragment of gold is put into it. The child is bathed. On the 10th or 12th day takes place the Nama-(dheya) karana, the "conferment of the name", a rite which may be of Indo-European origin. The child is given a secret name, known only to the parents and taken from a lunar mansion or a divinity or from clan usage, and in addition a public name, the structure of which varies according to caste. The choice of the public name is subject to strict rules, and is made to the accompaniment of oblations. Sometimes the secret name is conferred only at initiation.

In the third year the Chudakarman or Chaula, "tonsure", ceremony takes place. For the first time the hair is cut by a professional barber, and the child is given the style of hair dressing distinctive of his family. The dung of bulls and other potent substances, and some cereals, are placed before the fire. The hair is wetted with warm water, some blades of grass are woven into it, and it is cut with four cuts to the right and three to the left. The clippings are placed on cowdung and then buried in a grassy place or in a stable. The first shaving of the beard, Godana, which takes place at the age of sixteen, is similar. These ceremonies include some details going back to Indo-European times (Kirste).

THE UPANAYANA

§ 225. The most important of these sacraments for the boy is the Upanayana, "introduction" to the teacher. It takes place at the eighth (or tenth) year for the Brahman, at the eleventh for the Kshatriya, and at the twelfth for the Vaishya, but these are subject to variation. The boy is dressed in special clothes, and sits with his master behind the fire. The master hands him a stick, and then three times in succession places on his shoulder the yajnopavita (originally a strip of cloth passing over the left shoulder and under the right armpit, later a thread in the same position). He then extends his hand to the pupil, makes him walk round him to the right, and conducts with him a dialogue of request and acceptance under the auspices of Savitri, the witness-god. Then he places his hands on the boy's shoulders, takes his right hand in his, touches his heart and navel, gives him some instruction, and commends him to the gods. The boy thus becomes dvija, "twice born" and is entitled to eat of the offerings at the sacrifices.

The period of study now begins, consisting in reading of the Veda according to a strict procedure of recitation. First he has to learn the famous introductory prayer, the Savitri or Gayatri (Rigveda III. 62. 10). The pupil has now to put on the domestic fire every morning and evening a log which he must bring from the forest ; he must beg food for his master and himself in the village ; he must sleep on the ground, or at least on a low bed ; he must observe chastity, abstain from certain articles of food, worship the twilight morning and evening, and strictly obey his teacher. All this ceremony, which resembles the Zoroastrian investiture ceremony, is only an initiation rite strongly brahmanised, with some borrowing from nuptial practices.

§ 226. The beginning, Upakarana, of each term of study, which lasts from four to six months, is generally in the rainy season, and is marked by oblations and vacation of three days. Short vacations are provided during the year. At the end of the term, offerings, a bath and a sacrifice to the ancestral spirits are made. The total period of study may be as much as 48 years ; in fact it is not fixed. The end of the period of study (Samavartana, "return" to family life) is marked by an ablution which frees the pupil from his vows ; he is now called snataka, "he who has bathed". The insignia of his studentship are thrown into water, and he puts on new clothes.

During his studies the pupil must perform certain vows, vrata, each one of which requires an initiation, diksha, and an absolution, and these are taken before the teaching of the Rigveda or of certain esoteric parts of the Veda. Other observances, in particular certain tabus, are provided for the snataka.

MARRIAGE

§ 227. Leaving aside its juridical and social aspects, the ritual of marriage, Vivaha, of which some parts are to be found in the shrauta texts, can be summed up as follows. First of all the date of the ceremony (constellation, etc.) is carefully decided. The requisite qualifications (caste, bodily signs, structure of the name, etc.) in the man, and more especially in the woman, are ascertained. The ceremonies begin with the despatch of messengers to the father of the girl ; they present themselves and set forth the claims of the family. The agreement is sealed with a solemn formula and a contract. The young man is taken to the house of his future parents-in-law by girls. He is received as an honoured guest with rites of Arghya and Madhuparka. He anoints the girl with oil, gives her a new cloth, a porcupine quill and a mirror ; she is then solemnly handed to him by her father. Then follow oblations : the brother or mother pours out parched grains from the hollow of the joined hands. The girl stands on a stone, walks round the fire, and takes the "seven steps" (the event which seals the union as irrevocable), led by her fiance, who takes her hand (panigrahana, a term which has become equivalent to "marriage"), touches her shoulders, her heart and her navel, and sprinkles her with water. The clothes of the couple are tied together, or alternatively their hands. At this point gifts are made to the teacher, and there follows the Simantonnayana (see §223), which is the occasion for the bride to weep. A procession (prayana) is formed, which takes the bride to her new home, in a carriage or on a horse or elephant. The domestic fire is taken with her, and on the way propitiatory ceremonies are performed. She enters the house without touching the threshold, and is seated on the skin of a red bull. On her lap is placed a child born of a woman who has given birth only to boys, all of whom are living. The couple then eat some food which has been offered to the gods, the husband first tasting it and then giving it to his wife ; or alternatively they anoint each other, and touch each other's heart with food which has been offered. In the evening mantras are recited concerning the Pole star and the star Arundhati, which the husband points out to his wife.

After the ceremony chastity is observed for three days : a staff is placed on the bed between the spouses. On the fourth day oblations are offered in order to drive away evil influences from the bride, and the remains of the offerings are mixed and used to anoint her all over the body, even to the fingernails and the hair. Most of the formulae pronounced during the ceremony are taken from the great hymn of the Marriage of Surya. On the fifth day, at least according to Baudhayana, an offering of the bali type is made to an udumbara tree, to the branches of which gifts are attached. Certain forms of marriage are celebrated with special rites.

Many of these practices are found among other Indo-European peoples. Masked by a magical symbolism, they show a contractual form of marriage, in which there also survive traces of marriage by capture.

THE FUNERAL CEREMONY

§ 228. The funeral ceremony, Antyeshti, is normally a cremation ; at least that is the only form described in the texts. But the hymns refer to others : they mention the dead "burnt by the fire and not burnt", buried, exposed and thrown away. One of the funeral hymns of the Rik appears to allude to a burial.

According to the ritual the dead man (who has not been allowed to die in his bed) is anointed, his hair, beard and fingernails are cut, his thumbs are tied together, and he is freshly clothed, garlanded, and carried, either in men's arms or on a cart, to a cremation ground. The procession, carrying fires at the head, includes the relatives, whose hair has been cut off. A branch of a tree tied to the corpse and trailing along the ground effaces the footprints of the mourners. A series of formulae urge the dead man to join the ancestral spirits and Yama, and to avoid Yama's dogs,and other formulae drive evil spirits away from the corpse. The body is given a last toilet, and is then placed on the pyre, situated in the midst of the three fires. The widow lies down at his side, but she is soon asked to rise again and to join her brother-in-law, who takes the place of her dead husband (practice of the levirate). If he was a Kshatriya, his bow is taken from him, or alternatively it is broken and placed beside him. If he was a Brahman, the instruments of the sacrifice are placed on the pyre with him, except those which are incombustible, and these are thrown away. In the Rigveda, a goat is burnt with the corpse : that is Agni's share. In the ritual, it is a cow, with which the corpse is "garnished" limb by limb in order to protect it against the flames, while a goat is tied to the pyre by a string so weak that the animal can break it without getting hurt. Sometimes the cow is released instead of being burnt. Prayers and offerings are made while the fire is being lit. No doubt the procession and the cremation were accompanied by a group of female mourners, with hair cut off, who beat their breasts, howled and danced.

§ 229. There followed purificatory rites, Ashaucha : the relatives bathe, offering the dead man a libation from the bath water, change their clothes, and walk under an arch made of branches of a tree. While doing so they must refrain from looking behind them, and on returning to the house they touch some objects which are considered lucky. The fire, since it belonged to the dead man, is taken out of the house otherwise than through the door, and is left in a deserted spot From the day of death abstinence and continence are observed from three or ten days, or alternatively until the collection of the bones ; before the bones are collected the ground beneath the pyre is cooled by means of water plants and a frog. The "sifted" bones are collected, placed in an urn, moistened with aromatic substances, and buried. Those who perform this service proceed without turning round, purify themselves by bathing, and eat a mortuary meal.

Some texts require that a monument, shmashana, must be erected to commemorate an important man ; the ceremony, Pitrimedha, is perform long after the death, and includes a vigil beside the bones, or alternatively beside dust from the place of burial. Metal vessels are beaten, music is played, and female mourners walk round the remains beating their thighs. The remains are taken before sunrise far from the village and from any road, to a place free from thorny plants but well provided with other roots. A ditch is dug, or alternatively some furrows are traced with a plough. The bones are placed in the ground, covered with stones and earth, and some grains of corn. Water and milk are poured into small holes near by. On the return precautionary measures are taken : the footprints are confused, a symbolic stone is set up to divide the dead from the living, a purificatory fire is lit, and the participants bathe. Special rites are laid down for certain cases, in particular for an ascetic. Vaikhanasa mentions a curious practice of marriage with the dead.

§ 230. It is difficult to say how far these rites are Indo-European, since other peoples of the group show only fragments of them, and the most important are found among peoples not of this linguistic family. The ruling idea was to ensure that the dead man was taken, by means of the fire, to the sky, and that he could live thereafter. Also, and this may be more ancient, the fire was thought of as freeing the living from pollution (Oldenberg, Caland). It is possible that the cremation represented a sort of human sacrifice. All the details are of the types of purificatory or magical defensive rites. The animal which is burnt seems to be a substitute victim, used to keep evil spirits away. It is significant that the dead was provided with supplies for his journey, of which traces remain in the objects placed (at this time or formerly) on the funeral pyre ; among these, originally, was the widow herself. The Rigvedic formula which invited her to come down again among the living gave indirect sanction to the immemorial custom of burning the widow, which classical India revived.

THE SHRADDHA AND THE DOMESTIC RITES FOR THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

§ 231. The Shraddha is a complement to the funerary rites, intended to transform the preta, the "dead", a vague and harmful spirit, into a pitri, a "father", a strong and friendly ancestor. The word means "that which results from faith". The Shraddha takes place on certain fixed occasions, birth, naming of the son, marriage, but more particularly is a monthly ceremony, taking place on the day of the new moon after mid-day (or on another day). It is characterised by the offering of balls of food, pinda. The Fathers, that is the direct ancestors, are represented by Brahmans, chosen with care, to the number of three. The master of the house gives them food and presents and honours them like fathers. Sesame is poured into vessels full of water, with which their hands are sprinkled. The rite is similar to the Pindapitriyajna (tee §232), except that the balls are placed on grass strewn on the ground.

In addition there were observed the funerary rites of the the ashtaka, in winter, in the last quarter of the moon, consisting of oblations of meat, cakes, etc. According to one text, at a crossroads a cow is killed, and its members are cut to pieces and given to the passers-by. A supplement to this rite is the Anvashtakya, which takes place in an enclosure, into which the sacred fire has been brought. The offerings are placed on strewn grass, and the balls offered to the fathers and mothers are placed either on the ground or in three or four ditches dug for the purpose, as in the Pindapitriyajna. Finally, the Mahayajna (see §219) includes a daily oblation to the spirits of the dead.

THE PUBLIC RITES FOR THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

§ 232. The public rites for the spirits of the dead have been preserved (a) as part of the Chaturmasya (see §203), where they take the form of offerings of cakes, grain, and a mixture of flour and milk. The sacrifice takes place in a hut to the south of the dakshina hearth. Water is placed on the ground so that the spirits can wash, and small balls are placed on the four corners of the altar.

(b) More important is the Pindapitriyajna, which is usually associated with the sacrifice at the syzygies, but is also treated as a domestic rite. There are two preliminary oblations to Agni kavyavahana and to Soma pitrimant. The Fathers are invoked by name : they are invited to come and wash in the water which has been made ready in a ditch or in a small furrow strewn with darbha grass. With the remains of the offerings smalls balls are made, and these are put into the ditch. The Fathers are asked to come and eat, while the sacrificer turns his face away towards the north "for as long as he can hold his breath". Then he announces the end of the funeral meal, makes gifts to them, and sends them away. Some of the balls of food are thrown away or given to a cow, and the rest are eaten by the sacrificer's wife, at least if she desires a son.

These rites must have been evolved in imitation of the domestic rites and must have been secondarily Brahmanised (Ronnow). They show many characteristics of the popular cult : for example the pinda oblation partakes of the nature of the bali (see §220) (Arbman). A striking feature of the whole cult of the dead is that it inverts the procedures of the cult of the gods (Caland) : movements are made from right to left, recitations are performed once, not three times, oblations go from north to south, etc. The prevailing colour is black, and the sacred word is svadha, the name of the food offered to the dead transformed into a ritual interjection.

(c) MAGIC

INTRODUCTORY

§ 233. As has been noticed in many instances, the Vedic religion is interwoven with magic, and an identical ritual can be used for the one and for the other (Mauss). The Brahmanas emphasise the coercive character attributed to the rites, and the abstruse ideas which are expressed through them (see §168). A large number of ritual practices can be traced back to magical origins, in the public cult (the Rajasuya, the Sautramani, the "occasional" rites, and the soma sacrifices in general), and still more in the domestic cult, which reveals the religious life as involved in a network of magic. The relations are very close : slight modifications or additions to the ordinary ritual result in bewitchment, abhichara.

It is difficult to decide how far magic in the true sense, exorcism, was admitted into the high cult. Magic is condemned in many passages, though in others there are instructions to combat it by using magic. But in fact it is accepted, and we find the formulae of the Kaushika introduced in the most solemn ceremonies (Caland) : the oblation is scattered or thrown into the fire as the verses of the Atharva are recited, and the remains of the oblatory butter, poured into a vessel of water, used to anoint the object which the magical operation has in view.

§ 234. The essence of this magical operation is the muttered formula, mantra, which contains a benediction or a malediction, or sets forth the constraint to be exercised upon such and such an object or person. Mantras are couched in halting style, full of verbal tricks, arbitrary words, and inverted phrases, in which the general tenor rather than the strict meaning is important. Metaphor is an organic part of it, involving the very form which the act is to take. When the Atharva (III. 25) says "consumed with a burning ardour" and "may the stirrer stir you !" these expressions govern the magical operation, which consists in the man who wants a woman to love him hanging a vessel of boiling water at the foot of his bed and stirring it with his toes. In the saman the melody is what is essential. The ritual interjections are replaced by other words. There are also passages of profane dialogue and phrases of portent in which the speaker declares that he already possesses what he is asking for.

The power to which these prayers are addressed is not necessarily a personal entity, Nirriti or any spirit. The appeal may be made to substances, which are addressed as "bodies", or a roundabout phrase may be used : "that which (of such an object) is sinister, fearful, or wrongly offered". Or finally reference may be made to the essence of an animal or a plant

(Oldenberg). A relation of participation is established, however superficial may be the resemblance between two objects.

The magical act rests in a large measure on a transfer or a symbolic representation. The choice of plants, of timber, of animals, etc., is determined by the precise object in view. Red lac is employed against wounds. The knots in the house are untied to ensure an easy delivery. One who wants rain must tie the cord of the sacrificial post low down, or must allow himself to "dry up" gradually for 12 days. To secure prosperity for one's sons one must draw a ladle full for the eldest and then less and less full for the others in order of age. To exorcise Nirriti one places a black garment on a raft of reeds coated with clay and lets it be carried away by a stream ; or one throws old sandals and an old umbrella into the fire. In order to change the course of a river, the course which it is desired to follow is wetted with water and planted with reeds, some gold is placed on it, and a frog with green lines, its legs tied together with a blue and red string : "an image of aquatic life is created, and reality will follow it" (Oldenberg). A circle is used to protect an area from the power of evil spirits. The game of dice is highly symbolic, as also are images (in clay, wax, wood, etc.) of a person whom it is desired to get into one's power or to destroy, the image being pierced, burnt or eaten. In order to starve one's enemy he is made to eat a meal which a starving man has partaken of. In order to gain victory, one uses earth turned up by a boar and thus impreganated with his energy.

§ 235. There are also direct rites (drying or washing of the harmful substance) some of which depend on the principle of participation : magical power being present in the whole being and everything that it touches, it is necessary to burn nail-parings, hair, the remains of meals, and the earth of footprints.

The observances of magic resemble those of the ordinary ritual : fasts, mortification, sexual abstinence, nudity. The most favourable time is the night ; the place is a cemetery, a forest (an isolated tree in a glade), a crossroads, but often also the ordinary field or house. The directions play an important part, and the practices often coincide with those of the ritual of the spirits of the dead : thus the colour black prevails in both. The objects used are very various : plants of all species (with milky or poisonous sap), unguents, refuse, birds' tongues, thatch from the roof, heart's blood, objects derived from a corpse, etc. To predict the future or find hidden articles, reed-stems, mirrors, jars of water are used. There are not many rites involving bloodshed, and we have come across no allusion to human sacrifice.

As to the purpose to be attained by the magical act, it covers the field of possible desires : health, wealth, enjoyment of all kinds, successful outcome of an undertaking, victory in a game, the setting of one's children in life. Love charms occupy a large space, and even more numerous are acts to cure diseases and possession by evil spirits, the rites varying for each particular affliction. Acts are performed to cause an enemy to be wounded or killed, and his property to fall into the possession of the person for whom the act is undertaken. The act may be intended to protect against accidents. and when accident takes the form of ritual error, the act is one of expiation (see §218). The magical effects in the Samavidhana are the same as those of the classical Yoga : making oneself invulnerable, flying through the air, controlling fire, attaining mastery over the gods and the world, freeing oneself from future births or determining them, or attaining to immediate liberation.

THE BANISHING OF EVIL INFLUENCES (SHANTI)

§ 236. Evil powers may be warded off by propitiation : homage is rendered to demons (who are given the remains of the sacrifice, the husk of grain, the blood, etc.) ; in the offering to snakes, they are fed with the idea of getting rid of them. First come preventive procedures : silence, hiding, disguise, burying things in the ground. Contact is avoided (with the sacrificial post, with the woman in childbed) ; looks are turned away ; on leaving the place where something of evil omen has occurred, one refrains from looking back. One obliterates one's footprints, one leaves the house otherwise than by the door. It is a negative rite of this kind to stay awake.

The supreme positive remedy is water (washing). Wiping has the effect of warding off evil (the face is wiped after a bad dream ; cf. the part played by the plant apamarga, "that which wipes"), as also do burning, smoking, noise and smells. The stick, which is the badge of initiation as of consecration, is obove all a weapon against the spirits. The harmful substance is shaken off and driven away by transferring it to a bird, which acts as the scapegoat, both in sickness and in "seizures" by spirits which make themselves felt in physical maladies (thus jaundice is transferred to a parrot, and headache to the hills and forests).

In cases of "possession" several of these procedures are followed : the possessed is anointed with the remains of a mixture of butter unguents which has been offered as an oblation. It is poured on the patient's head, at a crossroads, after having been placed in a vessel full of charcoal. Then he enters a river, walks up against the stream, and scatters the mixture, while a Brahman sprinkles it on his back. Finally he fills a vessel of unbaked earth with the same mixture and hangs it on a tree near a bird's nest.

ATTRACTION OF USEFUL INFLUENCES

§ 237. Forces are communicated by contact, direct or symbolic (as with the moon). The bride who is made to stand on a stone receives the firmness of the stone. Anointing, sprinkling, and others of the procedures mentioned above have this sense. Food is particularly important from this point of view : it transmits to the person who eats it a quality which derives from the elements of which it is made, from the form of the dish, and the mode of preparation. A shared meal distributes this quality. Finally, a glance of the eye attracts, as it also drives away (the evil eye).

The existence of amulets (mani) is often mentioned. They are mostly of vegetable origin (or made from milk, honey, gold, etc.), and often in the form of a necklace. They are regarded as animated powers and are also used for the purpose of "attraction".

THE CURSE AND THE OATH

§ 238. Cursing is one application of the power of the verbal formula. The emphasis is on the "truth", the sign of which is a comparison ("as truly as the creeper embraces the tree" is the formula for winning the love of a woman). The power of the formula is increased by invocations of the gods as judges, and the name of the person upon whom the curse is pronounced is often mentioned. The idea is often expressed that a curse recoils upon the person who sends it.

In the oath, that is the curse directed against oneself (the word shapatha conveys both ideas), in the event of an assertion being untrue or a promise not being fulfilled, the subject gives as hostage his own life, the lives of his family, or his possessions present and future. Varuna is taken as witness, as also the cows and the waters, and symbolic actions and gestures are added to the words. The oath is accompanied by lustration, and divine punishment follows failure to fulfil it.

DIVINATION

§ 239. Divination depends largely on imitative magic ; the same symbols serve here to give the key to present and future events.

It makes use of dreams (one text describes ten kinds of dreams which foretell death), and the incidents of the sacrifice, the movements of the victim or the direction of drift of the smoke. Events in the sky, meteors, lightning, hail, are used for prediction. Other indications are drawn from the cries of animals and the flight of birds. Means of averting the predicted events are described. There are many references to signs observed before battle, which the king must understand in order to ward off disaster. The texts mention men who know the signs of the constellations and can make horoscopes, and others who know the signs on the body and on the hand (cf. the marks required in a wife or husband).

In the Agnichayana a horse serves in some measure as an oracle, and the texts set forth the manner in which such signs can be made to yield oracles.

Finally there are traces of the use of the ordeal, perhaps in the Atharvaveda ; there are ordeals by water, and more often by fire, which serve to establish ritual purity or legal innocence.

THE PRACTICES OF YOGA AND OF ASCETICISM

§ 240. Magic and even the ordinary ritual show points of contact with the classical Yoga, so that Hauer has claimed to find the antecedents of Yoga in breathing exercises (retention of the breath), sweating, bodily postures (such as the uttanapad mentioned as early as the Rigveda), fasts, dances and various practices of intoxication. Some of these practices occur in isolation ; others, especially those of an ecstatic character, figure in the cult, in particular during initiation and consecration, as also do certain states of "rapture" with hallucinations, and of concentrated meditation.

Sometimes these seem to be foreign to the Brahmanic cult, as do the facts concerning the Vratya (see §210), or what we guess about the muni of the Rigveda, that long-haired ascetic who "swathed in the wind and clothed in brown dust...flies through the air" and "drinks with Rudra from the poison cup".

Tapas is the ascetic "heat" (creative heat in the cosmogonic essays), which confers supernatural powers on men as on the gods, and derived originally from the sun cult and the fire cult. Various practices are capable of generating tapas, from sitting near the fire or in the sun, to internal heating, ecstasy, and the consumption of intoxicating and narcotic substances. The Vaikhanasadharmasutra gives some facts about the adepts in Yoga, showing that the Vedic tradition was gradually supplemented by ascetic practices deriving from prehistoric origins, which, developed by speculation, expanded above all with the doctrine of the ashramas (see §256).

5. CIVILISATION

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

§ 241. The names of rivers alone permit of certain identification. The river *par excellence* in the Rigveda is the Sindhu (Indus), which is known at least in the upper and middle course. There is no clear knowledge of the ocean (called samudra, "assemblage of waters") before the time of the Brahmanas, where there are references to the ocean which surrounds the earth, and the eastern and western seas. The "five rivers" which later give its name to the Punjab are mentioned as early as the hymns : Vitasta (Jhelum), Asikni (Chenab), Parushni, later Iravati, (Ravi), Vipash (Beas), Shutudri (Satlej). More important, indeed the very focus of Rigvedic geography, is the Sarasvati, which is assumed to be the modern Sarsuti, between the Satlej and the Jamna. With the Indus and its five tributaries it forms the "seven rivers" of the Veda. The Yamuna (Jamna) itself is very seldom mentioned, and the Ganga (Ganges) only once.

In the north is the Himavant or Himalaya ("abode of the snows") with the peak Mujavant (in Kashmir ?). In the south the land was not known as far as the Vindhya, the name of which does not occur in the Vedic literature. In the west the Afghan rivers are named, Kubha (Kabul), Suvastu (Swat), Krumu (Kurram), Gomati (Gumal), but despite the survival of Indo-Iranian names (Indo-Scythian, Wust) there is now hardly any support for the view that some of the hymns were composed in Iran (those of the VIth book according to Hillebrandt, of the VIIIth according to Hopkins).

In the following period the centre of interest passes to the Doab, the west fades out and the east emerges step by step, from Kosala (modern Oudh) to Anga (eastern Bihar). In the Himalaya lived peoples known in particular to the Atharvaveda, and still father north, doubtless in Kashmir, were the Uttarakuru and the Uttaramadra. The texts refer to peoples more or less outside the Brahmanic community towards the south : the Andhra, Pundra, Pulinda, Shabara, Naishadha. Vidarbha (modern Berar) is known (Jaimini Upanishad-Brahmana), but Rasa is no doubt mythical (Lommel).

If no names of towns can be identified with certainty in the hymns (Wust claims that the terms Alaka and Puraya refer to towns), the Brahmanas know Asandivant, capital of the Kuru, Kampila, Kaushambi and Kashi.

TRIBES

§ 242. The tribe most in evidence in the hymns is the Bharata, living to the east of the Shutudri. Their king Sudas, of the Tritsu clan, supported by the priest Vasishtha, defeated ten allied kings led by the priest Vishvamitra, and drowned their troops. Of these tribes five names are frequently mentioned : the Anu on the Parushni, the Druhyu their closest allies, the Turvasha and the Yadu also closely associated, and finally the Puru on the Sarasvati. These are the peoples who seem to be referred to by the terms the "five clans" and the "five establishments".

The same Sudas was also victorious farther to the east over the (non-Aryan ?) king Bheda. These struggles form the historical background of the Rigveda. The tribe of the Puru was the most important ; at a later time it entered into alliance with the Bharata, forming with them the new group of the Kuru (deriving in part from new immigrants ?). Together with the Panchala (formerly the Krivi), the Kuru, who had established themselves in the Doab (which the later literature, from their name, called the Kurukshetra), formed the centre of the Vedic culture in the period after the hymns. Their kings are the models of royalty, the texts take shape among them, and the Bharata as a distinct tribe are no more than a glorious memory. The first notable king is Parikshit, mentioned in the Atharvaveda, one of whose descendants is Janamejaya, who according to the Satapatha celebrated the horse sacrifice. It seems that the Kuru-Panchala disappeared soon, and the Brihadaranyaka proves the extinction of the Parikshita.

In the east were the Kosala and above all the Videha (also Videgha) in north Bihar, with Mithila (modern Tirhut) as their centre ; their king Janaka was contemporary with Yajnavalkya and Shvetaketu, the teachers of the White Yajus. His rival was Ajatashatru of Kashi, whom some have wished to identify with the Ajatasattu of the Buddhist texts, the contemporary of the Buddha. Still other names appear. The tribe of the Magadha emerges from the shadows : a tribe considered by the Atharva as far off and apparently not Brahmanised ; some have suggested that it is the clan of the Vratya (see §210). All these are the people who carried the Vedic culture, but no doubt only the ruling groups were Aryans, and the masses had to submit to a progressive colonisation.

THE DASA

§ 243. In addition to tribal wars between "Aryans" the Veda refers to wars against the Dasa or Dasyu, people with black skins, "without nose" (with flat noses ?), of barbarous speech, and strangers if not enemies to the cult. Undoubtedly these were the aboriginals whom the Aryans found on their way, and drove back or enslaved ; they may have been Dravidians, whose presence in the north-west at an early period has been assumed. They lived in fortresses, pur, no doubt small primitive forts surrounded by a fence. They possessed vast herds of animals. Some names of their chiefs are known, but the whole group have been turned into demons (see §151). It is possible that the word Dasa has an ethnic meaning, and reference is made to the Irano-Scythian name transcribed by the Greeks as Daoi or Dasai (Hillebrandt, who also identifies the Pani (see §151) with the Parnoi of Strabo).

SOCIAL DIVISIONS : TERRITORIAL GROUPS

244. The social organisation rests on the family, which is of the patriarchal type (with possible traces of the matriarchate). Polygamy is practised, at least in the princely families (cf. the four wives in the Ashvamedha, see §214). There is no polyandry, nor (except in one doubtful case) infant marriage The prohibitions on marriage, in addition to the ban on incest alluded to in the Yama-Yami hymn, are, in the Brahmanas, marriages within the gotra ("we marry", says the Satapatha-brahmana, "in the 4th or 3rd generation"), and in the domestic sutras, the marriage of agnates and cognates. It is not clear if the remarriage of widows is allowed, except in the case of the levirate (see §26) ; as to the burning of widows, see §189. Marriage by purchase is known, though we do not know whether it was the normal form, and the price, shulka, paid to the father was usually a hundred cows and a carriage.

The father could dispose of his property, but the eldest son usually received the principal share, the notion of heritage resulting less from a transfer than from a confusion of persons (Mus). In addition the Veda recognises property in movable and immovable goods, but we cannot say whether it refers to communal lands.

The house is the group of the "big family". The social unit next above it is the grama, which means village, as opposed to forest or land, but more technically a "group of men in arms". Above this is the vish or "clan", and a number of these are sometimes referred to collectively as a jana or "tribe". But none of these words has a fixed sense. The "chief of the grama", gramani, seems to have been a military leader, while vishpati, "head of the vish", is only a family designation. In Iran we find a better articulated territorial division in three layers, with names which are partly similar : nmana, vis, zantu, whose members are respectively, in the Gatha, airyaman (Vedic aryaman), xuaetu and verezena (Vedic vrijana) (Benveniste).

THE SOCIAL CLASSES

§ 245. The hierarchical division of castes is a phenomenon which in its strict form is Indian, but it seems to have consolidated and legalised an ancient Indo-European (Dumezil) and certainly Indo-Iranian division into priests, warriors and herdsmen-agriculturists. It has left its imprint on the ritual of the Gatha and the Rik, where it has resulted in successive series of formulae concerning the cult, force of arms. and material goods (Benveniste).

The names of the castes (caste is called varna, "colour", a term which clearly betrays racial overtones) occur in a hymn in a late stratum of the Rigveda. They are almost the same as those in use later : the Brahmana or "priest" (on its true sense see §165), the Rajanya (Kshatriya from the time of the Atharvaveda) or "noble warrior", the Vaishya (in the Yajurveda also Arya) or "man of the commonalty", properly the cattle-raiser and cultivator. These three groups are brought together under the name, which is perhaps Indo-European, of Arya, "belonging to the Aryan community" ; the word is derived from ari, "guest", and "enemy", originally "stranger", according to Thieme, who thence deduces the primary sense of Aryan as "hospitable" ; according to Dumezil, ari already means Arya, "Aryan". These three groups together stand in opposition to a "non-Aryan" group, which includes the term Shudra, which in the definitive form of the organisation became the name of the fourth caste.

The same threefold division, with the addition of a fourth member, occurs in Iran, though with divergent names. The two highest classes probably carry hereditary functions. The partial overlap between the functions of the Brahman and of the warrior, or at least the encroachment of the laity upon priestly employments, should not be interpreted as evidence of change of caste, although the literature alludes to such changes. From the period of the Yajurveda, apparently, the mixed castes, the Vaishya and the Shudra, tend to divide into an increasing number of closed groups according to occupation, such as the Rathakara, "wheelwrights", which may be based upon ancient ethnic groupings.

The notion of caste is not strict : endogamy was not maintained completely, as unions between Arya and Shudra, and vice versa, are attested, and the idea of impurity and the prohibition upon commensality have not yet arisen. Broadly the caste is distinguished by heredity and occupation. Finally there is no accepted name referring to what are later called the "out-castes".

THE BRAHMANS

§ 246. Possessors of the ancient power of the brahman (see §165), the Brahmans form an influential corporation maintaining a hold through religion upon the essential activities of the country. They are the recipients and drinkers of the sacrificial offering. Respect is owed to them, and they enjoy a certain immunity. They were guardians of the Veda, teachers, and performers of the rituals, but no doubt they also followed non-religious occupations.

Every Brahman family, gotra, is affiliated to a Rishi, "saint", whose name it bears and who is called its gotra. Professionally they are divided into officiants (see §193), recruited perhaps from the Brahmans of the villages, and chaplains. The chaplains, purohita, is strictly a priest in the service of the king, later of an important man. Chosen by him, married to him, so to say, the purohita is minister and manager of the cult, presiding at the ceremonies, including domestic rituals, expiations and incantations He can even act as officiant, taking the place of the hotri, and at a more recent date of the brahman. His importance is a result rather than a cause of the existence of the priest caste (Oldenberg), and his emergence was inevitable when the power of the brahman began to be expressed exclusively through the public cult. In addition to its technical use (see §165), Brahman is a general designation of priest, related etymologically and functionally to the Roman Flamen, whose importance, according to Dumezil, derives from the idea of a human victim substituted for the king.

THE KSHATRIYAS

§ 247. Possessors of the kshatra, "imperium", the Kshatriyas wielded a power which balanced that of the Brahmans. The literature, which is mainly of Brahmanic inspiration, does not always allow this to be seen, but it is clear from the evidence of the Brahmanas and Upanishads. In the texts the Kshatriya *par excellence* is the king : in the Rigveda the chief of the clan or tribe, but occupying a position of greater importance by the time of the Brahmanas and Sutras, if we may judge from the Ashvamedha and the Rajasuya. The title "conqueror of the whole world" has already appeared. The dynasty of Srinjaya is said to have lasted for ten generations. The divine character of the king in the Vedic period is very clear : several divinities, Varuna, Soma, Yama bear the title of king, and on the other hand the king is Indra, an Indra who lives on earth, whose chariot is the thunderbolt. He is also Prajapati, that is the spiritual power embodied, and the royal ritual has been worked over from end to end in accordance with the Brahmanic ideal. He is "eaten by the priests", just as he himself is the "eater of his people". The title of Rajaputra, "son of the king", is known from the earliest times. The Yajus texts mention the Ratnin, "possessors of jewels", among whom, in addition to the gramani with enlarged powers, are found the suta, "equerry" (in fact, no doubt, already also "herald", "bard"), a senani, "chief of the army", a kshattri, a sort of chamberlain, and some more specialised functionaries. The sthapati must have been a magistrate with judicial powers.

A significant epithet applied to the ratnin is rajakrit, "maker of kings", "givers and takers of the imperium" ; this, with other indications, suggests that the monarchy was elective, and in fact the hymns make many references to the election of kings. However, it is also clear that the monarchy was (normally ?) hereditary. There are several references to the deposition of kings (Satapatha and Panchavimsha Brahmanas).

Not much is known definitely about the royal functions; the king was the military commander, at least in theory, as well as the religious head, and he also controlled the administration of justice, in particular of penal justice. The institution of wergeld is known to have prevailed in Rigvedic times (Roth); the price of blood was as high as a hundred cows. After Rigvedic times the wergeld became differentiated according to caste. Lists of crimes appear in certain texts, but the procedure is not clear. There are indications of the ordeal, and of corporal punishment, inflicted in principle by the king. There are two terms designating popular assemblies: samiti and sabha, the former bigger and of a more political character (it is the samiti which elected the king), and the latter of a social and judicial nature.

THE VAISHYAS AND SHUDRAS

§ 248. The vish, "clan", gave its name to the Vaishya. These are mentioned only incidentally, and we know little of their condition, which no doubt was similar to that of the Vaishya of classical India. Some texts show them as dependants of others, "oppressable at will", and the saying was current that they were "the mud between the bricks". On the other hand we know that they could rise to high positions, that of gramani, for example, and that the Vajapeya was open to them.

As to the Shudra (an ancient racial grouping ?), perhaps descendants of the Dasa, their social status is depicted in an unfavourable light: they are serfs, excluded from the sacrifice and from the life of the Aryans. Nevertheless there are allusions to rich Shudras in conspicuous positions and held in respect.

WOMEN

§ 249. Women have neither property nor the right of inheritance, and their wergeld is on a level with that of the Shudra, which suggest that their social position was low. But other evidence tends to show the opposite. There are women among the Rishis, and, in the Upanishads, among the theologians. The wife of the sacrificer has a part, though a passive one, in the ritual, and in some agricultural ceremonies the woman sacrifices even if she is not married. The nuptial rites emphasise the high value attached to the wife at the religious level: "the friend, half of the man". But from Rigvedic times onwards pity or contempt is expressed for the "girl without a brother", and the birth of a daughter is deplored. Finally, from certain references in the hymns it has been inferred that prostitution was fairly common (Pischel).

GIFT, EXCHANGE, CONTRACT

§ 250. The market and money are known to the hymns: an image of Indra is sold for ten cows, and the soma ritual proves the practice of marketing. Money first took the form of cows (images ?), and also of gold ornaments, nishka, no doubt of fixed value. Later on we find the krishnala, a berry serving also as a weight, the shatamana, a plate or piece of gold of the value of 100 krishnala, and some others. In the Atharvaveda Indra is the merchant, and the Pani have the character of greedy merchants. The usurer is mentioned in the Yajus, as also the head of the guild.

The gift has left some noteworthy traces in the ritual and in the vocabulary, from the honoraria paid to officiants, to the presents made to the betrothed couple, and to the parents of the child at tonsure, initiation, etc. In a number of these practices Mauss traces survivals of potlatch.[1]

The contract has special force, as is shown by the "personified contracts" which underlay Mitra and the assembly of the Adityas. It has left traces in the ritual of betrothal. It is affirmed by circumambulation, sprinkling, shaking hands, or anointing. Friendship—participation in the tasks of the clan—is also the outcome of a pact. The best known from of the contract is the loan, the term rina designating the debt (also the moral debt, whence "sin"). Failure to pay a debt could entail consignment to the pillory or slavery. There are references to interest payments of one-sixth and one-sixteenth.

MODE OF LIFE

§ 251. The predominant occupation in the hymns is the keeping and guarding of cattle. But in the domestic cult, rites connected with agriculture are no less prominent than those of cattle-raising. The plough is known under two names, and perhaps in two forms (a sowing plough—Bloch) : on the one hand, as referred to in the Yajus, a heavy instrument drawn by 24 bulls (!), and on the other a light harrow to which two sheep were yoked. The principal operations of agriculture were known, including irrigation and manuring. In the Rigveda the principal grain is yava (was it barley at that early period ?) ; to this in the Yajus and the Atharva other plants are added, including rice, wild or domesticated, of which several varieties were known. Names of trees are frequently mentioned, though we cannot tell whether the cultivation of trees was practised.

§ 252. There were large herds of cattle. The cows were milked three times a day, and were brought together for the purpose, at least for the midday milking. In the hymns the "desire for cows" is one of the reasons for making war, and the texts show an inexhaustible concern for the cow and its products.

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[1] The distribution of gifts with the object of raising one's social status.

Bulls were used for labour and carting. The horse was also highly valued, many words emphasising its speed and its strength ; it was used for breeding, carriage, and for chariot racing, of which the hymns speak with as much frequency as vagueness. Four-horsed chariots play some part in the ritual (see §212). Men evidently rode the horse, but not in battle. A number of varieties of horses were distinguished.

Other animals were domesticated : the sheep, goat, ass, dog, but the cat is not certain. It is not whether ushtra meant "the camel", as in later Sanskrit, or "the buffalo". Among the wild animals referred to are the lion in the Rik, and the tiger from the Atharva onward. The elephant is also mentioned from the earliest times ; it is domesticated after the Rigveda, but not at first for use in war.

CRAFTS

§ 253. The hymns speak of workers in wood, wheelwrights and carpenters, and of blacksmiths fanning the flames with birds' feathers. Utensils were made of wood or of the unidentified metal named ayas, which the texts later differentiate into red ayas (copper) and black ayas (iron). Gold is often mentioned and is used in many ways (Pischel notes in the hymns "an unbridled liking for gold") ; silver is rare.

There are references to tanners, and to several crafts practised by women, such as weaving. From the list of human victims in the Yajurveda, and from that of the artisans grouped round the Ashvamedha (Vadhula), we infer the existence of numerous crafts, evidence of an active social life. There is no certain evidence of navigation, except on the rivers, and the terms relating to it are rudimentary.

The house, as it is described indirectly in the domestic ritual, is of a primitive type : a framework of posts, connected at the top by cross beams, and surmounted by a thatch. The partitions (and the outer walls ?) were of matting. But it is possible that these were only sacrificial huts. Certain passages of the Atharvaveda suggest a more evolved structure, and even in the Rigveda (where harmya designates a large house with outhouses) it is clear that the cattle lived in the house. Bricks were used to build the firealtar (see §217), but there is no evidence of their use for other structures, though it has been supposed that the Rigveda refers to fortresses of unbaked brick. For urban agglomerations, see §241.

CUSTOMS

§ 254. Clothes were made of wool and skin, also of silk, flax, hemp and cotton, coloured yellow and red. Many kinds of gold ornaments were worn, and turbans, garlands, parasols, and scents. The hair was oiled, plaited among the women, and often curled among the men, who normally wore beards.

Food was mainly milk and its derivatives, and in addition various broths and cakes of cereal, milk and butter, also vegetables, fruit and honey. It should however be emphasised that the Vedic Indians were meat-eaters, as is shown by their rituals of marriage and hospitality ; the flesh of the goat, sheep, ox and perhaps the horse was eaten, being cooked in earthen pots or roasted on spits. Nevertheless some texts condemn meat-eating, either in general or in certain circumstances. The popular drink was sura (see §190).

Apart from racing, the most popular amusement was a sort of dice game, of which there were several varieties ; it resembled the Greek game, according to Kretschmer. It was played on the ground, with a variable number of the nuts of the vibhidaka. They were thrown, or gathered into heaps, and the aim was to get an even number, or preferably a number divisible by four. This was the throw called krita, "achieved", the inferior throws being the treta, "triad" when three were left, the dvapara, "other (than the krita) by reason of two", and the kali, "adversity" (or the name of a spirit of adversity), when only one remained (Luders, Caland). The Rigvedic game seems to have been somewhat different from this.

Dancing is referred to in several rites, even funeral rites, and from as far back as the hymns. The musical instruments are the drum, used especially for war and known in various forms, among which is the "earth drum"; the cithara (vina), also in various forms ; the flute, the conch-shell, etc. Singing was certainly much practised, apart even from the prominent place accorded to it in the public ceremonial. Hunting, with bow, noose and traps, was greatly liked ; it is possible that tame elephants were already used to capture wild ones. There were war-chariots with places for two, and carts, some with solid wheels, and the harness included a pole and a yoke.

THE DIVISIONS OF TIME

§ 255. The ordinary year, samvatsara—there are variants—contained 360 days, divided into twelve months, with a supplementary month introduced at various points. The allusion to the panchaka yuga, "cycle of five years", does not necessarily apply to the period between two intercalary months. It is possible that the practice was also known of inserting (at what point ?) twelve additional days in order to adjust the solar to the lunar year. The winter solstice was the beginning of the year. There were three seasons, ritu, and later five or six : vasanta, (spring), grishma, (summer), varshah, (rains), sharad, (autumn), hemanta, (winter), shishira, (frost). The Vedic names of the months, masa, are, according to the Yajurveda :

madhu madhava, shukra shuchi, nabha s) nabhasya, isha urja, saha(s) sahasya, tapa(s) tapasya. From the period of the Brahmanas they are called by the names of the nakshatras (see § 155). No cosmic period is mentioned, and despite all that has been said it is very doubtful if the Vedic word yuga bears the sense of "era". On the ideas of cosmology, see § 154 *et seq.*

The attempt has been made to discover references to writing in the Vedic texts (Goldstucker, Geldner), but it is improbable that writing was known. We have every reason, in any event, to believe that all the Vedic literature was transmitted orally.

THE ASHRAMAS

§ 256. Although the system was not established until after the Vedic era, it is convenient here to say a word on the ashramas, "modes", or stages", which numbered three, or more generally four, through which theoretically the Brahman's life passed. The word, which is not found before the Vaikhanasa texts, means "pain" (caused by religious exercises), and hence "place of these exercises" or "hermitage", and "mode of life" from the religious point of view.

The early Upanishads, in particular the Chhandogya, prepare the way for this division by stressing the conflict between the ideal of works and the family life, and the ideal of asceticism and the life of retirement from the world. The division is : Brahmanic student (brahmacharin), householder (Grihastha), and recluse ; to which the Shvetashvatara and other late texts add the state of the atyashramin, "he who is beyond the ashramas', for which, later, was invented a fourth stage, that of the samnyasin, "renouncers" (Maitri Vaikhanasa Dharmasutra). The Grihyasutra of the Vaikhanasa speaks of the "four ashramas". In the Chhandogya we find the idea expressed that the exemplary life consists in passing from one stage to another, although at first they were separate and autonomous modes of life. The doctrine of the ashramas is an attempt to combine within one orthodoxy two opposed conceptions, works and asceticism (Winternitz), the secular life and the contemplative life (Weinrich).

While the student stage (see §225) and that of the householder fall within the general social life, that of the recluse (Vaikhanasa after Gautama, more often Vanaprastha after Apastamba) presupposes the existence of an organised ascetic life, of which the Aranyakas supyly indirect evidence. The practices followed within the cult (tapas and the like) are described, as also some practised outside it, by munis (see §240) and Vratyas (see §210). The stage of the "renouncers" is foreshadowed by the pravrajin, "wanderers", of the Brihadaranyaka and by the Bhikshacharya, "life of the mendicant monk" of the same text, promised to those who know the atman.

Thus the origin of the two classes of ascetics, recluses of the woods and mendicant monks—who may formerly have been one—is connected with the speculations on the atman and samsara (Oldenberg), which does not exclude the possibility of a Brahmanisation of non-Aryan ideas, which may be reflected by the word shramana, one of the titles of the mendicant monk, magician and medicine-man. The word is post-Vedic, except for some isolated occurrences in the Brihadaranyaka and the Taittiriyaranyaka ; the Vaikhanasa has the expression shramanakagni, "the fire of the shramana".

CONCLUSIONS

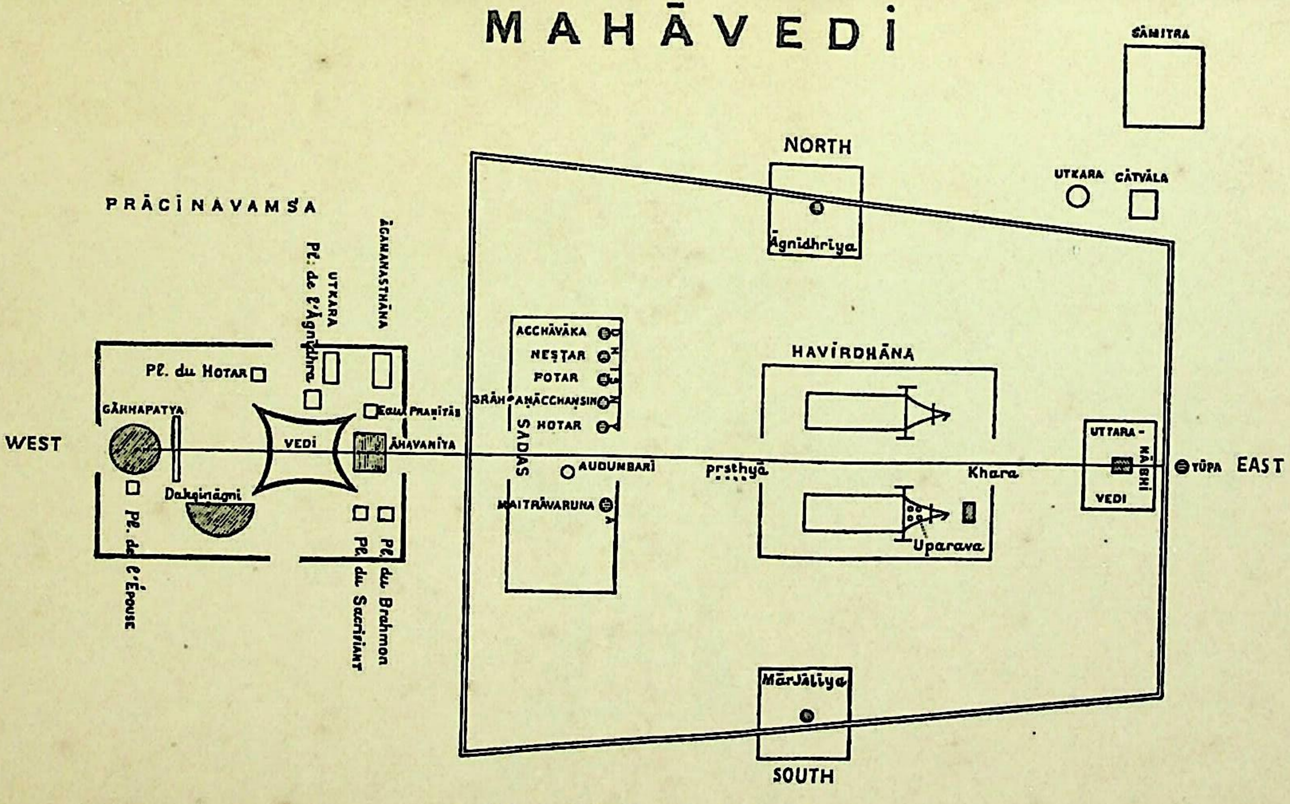
§ 257. Thus at the beginning we have a civilisation, already complex, imported by the Indo-European tribes, containing, according to Koppers (who bases his argument above all on the Ashvamedha ; controverted especially by Hauer), elements of the pastoral and equestrian type from Central Asia—together with traces of an "Arctic culture"—and elements of the agrarian and matriarchal type from the South.-(West)

During its development the Vedic civilisation came into contact with the indigenous culture of the Dravidians and Mundas, and to an extent which cannot be determined, with the urban culture of Mohenjo-Daro (Przÿluski). Though probably inferior to both, and certainly inferior to the latter in technical ability, it impose itself upon them primarily by its military power. The Indians of the Veda, of the mixed pastoral-agricultural type and perhaps semi-nomads, were above all warriors. The dominant concern expressed in the hymns is to defend the wealth they have conquered, to extend their domains, and to enjoy the "wide open" plains after having emerged from the "narrow" confines of their Iranian home. The intense development of the priestly spirit in the post-Rigvedic texts was not able entirely to overcome this state of mind, which spontaneously modified the more pacific trend of the Brahmanic culture which supervened after the first invasions. But the Vedic culture was also enabled to impose itself by the richness of its religious ideas, which were powerful enough to set the framework of all the forms assumed by the religions of India through the centuries which followed.

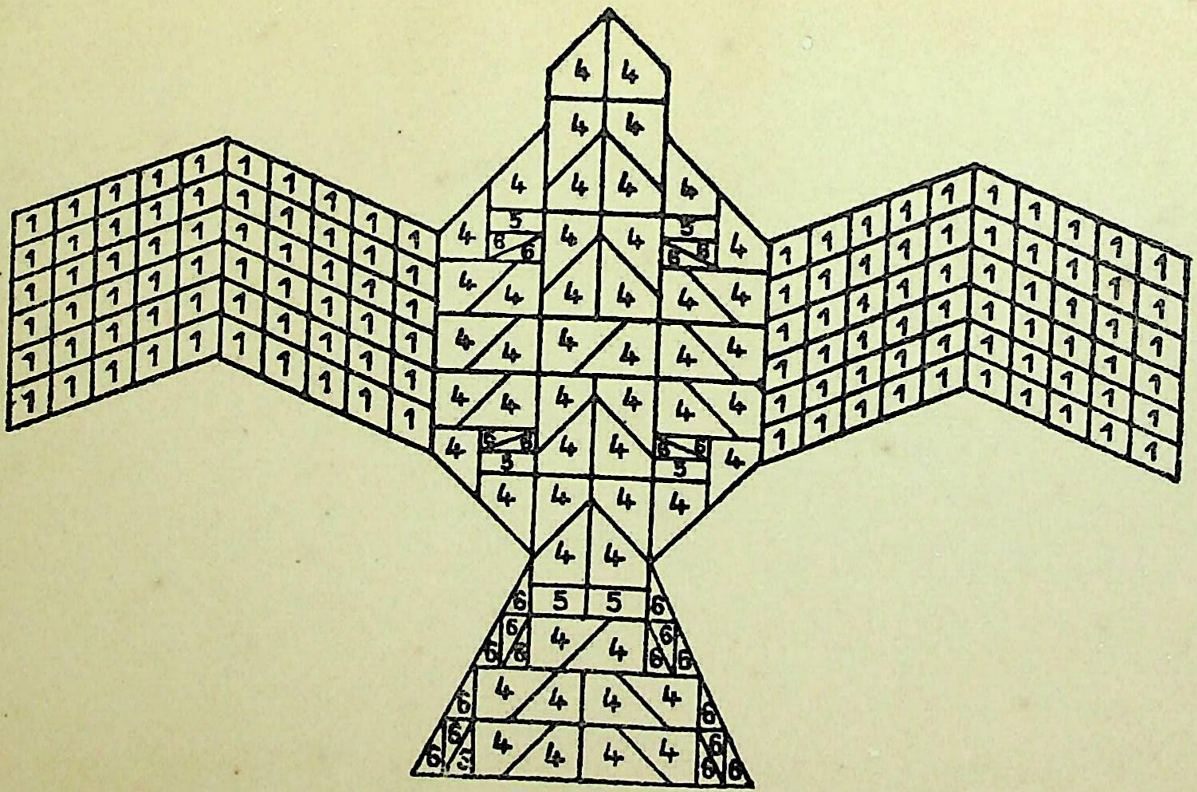
THE END

PLANS

(*See pp. 99-100*)


MAHĀVEDĪ
SĀMITRA
NORTH
UTKARA
CĀTVĀLA
Āgnīdhrīya
PRĀCĪNAVAMŚA
ĀGAMANASTHĀNA
UTKARA
Pl. de l'Āgnīdhra
Pl. du HOTAR
GĀRHAPATYA
WEST
VEDI
Eau PRAṆĪTĀS
ĀHAVANĪYA
Dakṣiṇāgni
Pl. de l'ÉPOUSE
Pl. du Brahman
Pl. du SACRIFIANT
ACCHĀVĀKA
NEṢṬAR
POTAR
BRĀHMAṆĀCCHAṂSIN
HOTAR
SADAS
AUDUMBARĪ
MAITRĀVARUṆA
HAVIRDHĀNA
Pṛsthyā
Khara
Uparava
UTTARA-
VEDI
NĀBHI
YŪPA
EAST
Mārjālīya
SOUTH

Plan of the Arena of Sacrifice
(after Caland and V. Henry, *L' Agniṣṭoma* and P. E. Dumont, *L' Agnihotra*)



Plan of the Altar of Fire in the shape of Falcon
(after G. Thibaut, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1875)

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